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Goosen beats Mickelson in dramatic US Open shootout

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Militants threaten to behead South Korean

Tanong ng Bagyo / A14
Death along da rilos: Sino ang may sala?

Be a gentleman, accept defeat, Miriam tells FPJ

By Carlos Pablo

TAKE it from me, she said. Gonzalez.

Senator-elect Miriam Defensor Santiago counseled actor Fernando Poe Jr. yesterday to be "very

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, [illegible] Views

Tuesday, June 22, 2004 ● 36 pages / vol. 19 / no. 193

Peso, stocks recover after marathon count

By Boris C. Dumlao
Business

FINANCIAL markets yesterday cheered the completion by a joint congressional committee of its marathon count of the votes cast in the May 10 presidential election and the proclamation of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Let's rebuild nation, Ping urges losers

GMA asks rivals to join Council of Elders

By Christine O. Avendaño, Juliet L. Javellana and Cynthia D. Balana

THE WAR is lost, let us now rebuild the country.

So, that call did not come from President Macapagal-Arroyo. It came from one of her political rivals, defeated presidential candidate Sen. Panfilo Lacson.

Now on vacation abroad, Lacson said in a statement released by his office at the Senate that the joint congressional canvass of the results of the May 10 elections showed Ms Macapagal to be the "clear winner."

The statement represented Lacson's act of finally conceding defeat. He had earlier said he "will not concede until the last ballot has been counted."

Lacson asked those who remained to question the results of the elections to "seek redress with the proper body mandated under the Constitution as the arbiter of such electoral process."

"As for myself, I have stated during the campaign that any candidate who fails to protect his votes, deserves to lose," he said.

"In the meantime, I am urging everybody to leave politics behind and give the president-elect the chance to rebuild the country."

Lacson vowed to do his share as he renewed his pledge to fight graft and corruption in government. He vowed to continue serving as a "watchdog and frontliner."

WINNING SMILE. *A glowing President Macapagal waves to the crowd upon her arrival in Vigan City. She won by more than a million votes over her closest rival, according to Congress' joint canvass committee.* [redacted]

GALANG. Target was 1 million votes for Macapagal in Mindanao.

LINCOLCO. Opposition should find a more credible winner.

Junk opposition's canvass petition, SC asked

By Philip C. Tubeza

PATENTLY ridiculous.

This was how Senate Majority Floor Leader Francis Pangilinan described the opposition's petition asking the Supreme Court to void the congressional canvass of votes for president and vice president.

Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr. filed the petition on June 17, saying the joint committee canvassing should be nullified since Congress had adjourned sine die, or indefinitely, on June 11.

Pangilinan, Rep. Raul Gonzalez and Solicitor General Alfredo Benipayo yesterday asked the tribunal to junk the plea, arguing that the resolution conducted by the 22-man panel was legal since Congress had adjourned only in timekeeping functions.

"It was not the first time this happened...they pointed out. In the 1992 and 1998 elections, Benipayo and Pangilinan recalled, Congress also canvassed the votes after it adjourned its legislative session.

Besides, Benipayo noted, it named had voted in 1992 for the unanimous adjourning Congress and presiding over the Senate and the House of Representatives hold a joint public session after it had the canvassing.

The tribunal's chief of court,

Minority report to show FPJ poll victory

By Carlos Pablo and Christine O. Avendaño

HOW administration allies allegedly manipulated the tech tallies in the sealed ballot boxes will be the basis of the minority report in the joint session of Congress.

The report, to be presented to a joint session of Congress tomorrow, will cite cases of supposed fraud during the May 10 presidential elections and show that actor Fernando Poe Jr. should be proclaimed the next president, opposition lawmakers said yesterday.

"The report will ultimately show that FPJ won the election. That's the main message," Maguindanao Rep. Didagen Dilangalen told reporters.

He said the minority report was still being drafted but that opposition legislators, in consultations, had agreed this would be the theme of the opposition version of the election.

The Congress plenary session is expected to officially receive tomorrow the final report of the majority-controlled 22-member joint canvassing committee which calculated the votes.

The minority report will sum up the dissenting views of the opposition legislators who took part in the canvass.

After 13 days of wrangling among committee members, the vote count showed Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo the victor by

'OPLAN MERCURY'

Ex-Erap ally links GMA aide to fraud in South

By TJ Burgonio and DJ C. Cabacungan Jr.

DENOUNCED by the "biased" congressional canvass, a former ally of ex-President Joseph Estrada surfaced yesterday, claiming that he was lured by an adviser of President Macapagal-Arroyo to implement a plan to reverse her victory vote in Mindanao.

In a press conference upon [illegible] by the opposition Ilocanos-[illegible]-Visayan Alliance, Bohol Rep. Erlinda Cuaderno Cubar, Secretary Gonzalez "Dodot" Limsuaco had [illegible] this morning Virgilio Mercado," which related to deliver 2 million votes in Mindanao in favor of Ms Macapagal's low [illegible] down.

Limsuaco, the President's adviser on environmental affairs, disclosed the allegations as lies and half-truths that, he said, should be filed in the proper forum like the Commission on Elections and not the media.

"This reflects desperation by a small sector of the opposition that is now clutching at straws instead of peacefully accepting the will of the people," Limsuaco said in a statement released shortly after the press conference.

According to Galang, Oplan Mercury involves the use of government officials to pledge support for the President, buying off of party-mates of FPJ standard-bearer Fernando Poe Jr. to switch sides, and tapping local election officials to manipulate the poll results.

"I had little participation, but this was enough to bring GMA, Mike Arroyo[illegible] to Malacañang and Galang, who was prosecuted in the media by members of the Task Force Anti-Fraud at Club 65 [illegible] in San Juan, Metro Manila.

The final canvas of Congress' joint canvassing committee found an 180 certificates of canvass showed Ms Macapagal running over Poe and three other rivals.

Asked what prompted him to come out, Galang said: "I saw the chaos in Congress, the lawmakers were always bickering along party lines."

He said he was never paid by Poe to confront and issue such allegations.

"I would be best for the opposition to find a more credible witness," Limsuaco said. He said he had never employed Galang and that the government never authorized his activities, although he said Galang volunteered and was allowed to campaign for the ad-

A MEMBER of the MMDA patrol inspects the steel spikes retrieved on Edsa, C-5 and other major roads in Metro Manila. [redacted]

Steel spikes litter roads; explosive device found

By Maryvan C. Orbe
Metro

A THREE explosive device as an exclusive village, and five vines all over the metropolis.

Police yesterday discovered a five-kilogram explosive device outside the Sanctuario de San Antonio parish church in Forbes Park in Makati City, a few hours after steel spikes appeared on major roads in Metro Manila, harming the tires of more than a hundred vehicles.

Officials said the incidents could be part of destabilization plot against the government. Security and police forces in Metro also since last month following intelligence reports of an alleged plot to stop the President Macapagal-Arroyo proclamation as the winner of the May 10 presidential election.

A police bomb disposal unit was called in about 2 p.m. Monday when Tomeno Binata, a security guard of the parish church, found the explosive device inside a trash bin at the entrance gate.

The National Capital Region Police Office (NCRPO) earlier informed Manila's superior about bomb threats in the area near Forbes Park, which lies just across the Makati Diamond district. Inside the gated residential enclave are the homes of foreign diplomats and the country's wealthiest businessmen.

Senior Supt. Jovito Gutierrez of the Makati police said the bomb, wrapped in a garbage bag and weighing about five to seven kilos, was powerful enough to cause serious damage within a 50-meter radius, including half of the church and the cemetery gate.

Gutierrez said the explosive device was made up of ammonium nitrate packed with coffee, highly explosive C-4, detonating cord, and an electric blasting cap.

He said the trash bin was brought in an open area outside the church and the explosive device was discovered. Through a wire-charged bomb disposal. The device was rigged to an alarm clock that was used as an improvised timing device.

"It was fortunate that the bomb was not detonated by the police because it could have exploded

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WEATHER FORECAST
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
TUESDAY, JUNE 22, 2004
Second FRONTPAGE

SC backs gov't vs Maynilad

By Philip C. Tubeza

THE SUPREME Court yesterday ruled that the government could draw from the $130 million performance bond of the Lopez-owned Maynilad Water Services Inc.

In an 18-page ruling, the SC First Division nullified the Quezon City Regional Trial Court's June 27, 2002 order stopping the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) from drawing on the Lopez bond.

The trial court had acted in response to its jurisdiction when it issued the stay order, and the ruling pressed by Associate Justice Adolfo Azcuna.

The SC said its ruling was "immediately executory" once the bond, which is a sum of money paid to formally promise to complete a job, will expire on July 30 after Maynilad failed to renew it.

Performance bond

Maynilad arranged the performance bond in July 2000, through an irrevocable Standby Letter of Credit, with a number of foreign banks, led by Citicorp International Ltd., as required by the concession agreement it signed when it took over the water services of the western zone of Metro Manila.

Heavy losses

Due to heavy financial losses, Maynilad filed in January 2003 a notice to terminate the concession agreement. However, on its unilateral affirmation, panel ruled in December that since over this there was no legitimate reason to terminate the agreement and ordered Maynilad to pay the concession fees that had fallen due.

On May 24, 2003, MWSS moved to draw P98 million from the bond after the debt ridden Maynilad failed to pay P3 concession fees in the government.

Maynilad opposed and got the stay order from Quezon City Judge Reynaldo B. Daway, who is hearing Maynilad's petition for rehabilitation.

This time, however, the SC said the issue was beyond the RTC's jurisdiction since the performance bond is not an asset of Maynilad and because the banks behind the bond were solidarily liable with the water utility.

"The banks do not hold any assets of respondent Maynilad that would be material in the rehabilitation proceedings nor is Maynilad liable to the banks at this point," the SC said.

"Reversing the (Nov. 27 order) enjoining (MWSS) from claiming an asset that did not belong to the debtor and over which it did not acquire jurisdiction, the rehabilitation court acted in excess of its jurisdiction," the SC found added.

Not asset, liability

It noted that Maynilad's financial statements as of Dec. 31, 2001 and 2002 did not show the irrevocable Standby Letter of Credit as part of its assets or liabilities, "and by respondent Maynilad's own admission, it is not."

The tribunal also defended Maynilad's contention that the bonds were not solidarily liable.

"The participating bank's obligation are solidary with respondent Maynilad in that it is a guaranty, direct, definite and an absolute undertaking to pay and is not conditioned on the prior exhaustion of the debtor's assets," the SC said.

"Being solidary, the claims against them can be pursued separately from and independently of the rehabilitation case... (Hence), therefore, exempted his jurisdiction, in holding that he was competent to act on the obligation of the banks under the Letter of Credit, it under the agreement that this was not a solidary obligation with that of the debtor," it added.

Banks' obligations

The SC said that terms of the Irrevocable Standby Letter of Credit do not show that the obligations of the banks are not solidary with those of Maynilad.

"Being a solidary obligation, the letter of credit is excluded from the jurisdiction of the rehabilitation court and therefore, in enjoining (the MWSS) from proceeding against the Standby Letter of Credit in which it had a clear right under the law and the terms of the said (letter of credit), (Daway's) acted in excess of his jurisdiction," the tribunal added.

PNP stands by raps against Poe lawyers

By TJ Burgonio and Cynthia D. Balana

THE PHILIPPINE National Police on standing by the charges it has lodged against "new dynasty" lawyers of opposition presidential candidate Fernando Poe Jr. in connection with the alleged abduction of an election official from Basilan.

The PNP Criminal Investigation and Detection Group had filed charges of serious illegal detention and grave coercion against Harriet Demetriou and Subic Bolinget over the alleged kidnapping of Basilan Sunlight Dali.

Deranged by the filing of the charges, the two quit as Poe's lawyers but Friday in order to destroy their time to the race.

PNP chief Director General Hermogenes Ebdane Jr. said that investigation by the CIDG showed that Dali, election officer of Tipo-tipo, Basilan, was abducted by the opposition camp.

"The Comelec official was forcibly brought to Manila. She was being convinced by the opposition to give a statement regarding the fraud that happened during the election in her area," Ebdane told reporters.

"If over the (PNP) complaint was filed, it was based on evidence," Ebdane added, pointing out the CIDG investigated the case at the request of Dali's family.

The opposition camp allegedly seized Dali, 51, and her children and held them from May 25 to June 9 in order to stop her from testifying against the administration on election irregularities in Tipo-tipo.

Demetrio, former Commission on Elections chair and Bodyguard, former immigration commissioner, said on Sunday that the case smacked of "political harassment."

"This is the handiwork of Malacañang. And Ong (PNP-CIDG head) is being used to harass us. This is deplorable. In a democracy, it's unforgivable if not to condone it's unbecoming," Demetrio said.

According to her, Dali voluntarily met with her on June 3 in Diamond Hotel Village, Makati City, where she was accompanied by her husband and other lawyers to look up her allegations of fraud before a Makati City prosecutor.

Bodyguard, for his part, said he had no contact with Dali.

The leaders of Basilan yesterday assailed for the integrity of Dali.

In a press conference at the House of Representatives, Deputy Speaker for Muslim Affairs Abdulgani "Gerry" Indanan and Basilan Gov. Wahab Akbar said there was no truth to the claim of Poe's lawyers that the elections in the province was marred by fraud.

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Comelec to hear final arguments in Biazon case

By Marvin P. Mardi

THE FINAL hearing on the annulment of 366 Bulacan Bicutan's proclamation will be heard today before the Four Division of the Commission on Elections.

Election Commissioner Resurrection Borra said the said arguments have been set for 10 a.m. as representatives of Biazon and Sen. Robert Barbers would present additional data to support their arguments. The division would try to resolve the case before June 30.

Biazon was proclaimed as the 12th winning senator after he garnered 10,631,275 votes against Barbers' 10,634,585, a margin of 13,685 votes.

When 11 of his colleagues were proclaimed earlier, Biazon's lead nee Barbers was around 40,000 votes.

But when the Comelec can vassed the additional supplemental certificates of canvass (COCs) from Quezon City, Lanao del Sur and city barangay in Metro Manila, Barbers lead was reduced to 13,685.

Accordingly to the Barbers petition filed by Barbers camp, there are still 29,208 votes still to be canvassed—enough to overtake Biazon's lead.

Biazon's camp questioned the basis of Barbers' 29,208 votes, claiming these were based on the alleged number of voters, not the actual number of votes cast, as shown by the certificates of canvass from these areas.

Meanwhile, Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos is expected to show up at the poll body's office today, two weeks after undergoing an operation on his shoulder at a hospital.

Abalos, who is suffering from diverticulosis, had an operation on June 7, and has been recuperating since. During his absence, two of his colleagues—Virgilio Garcillano and Rufino Javier—were not reappointed by Malacañang and dismissed by appointees when Congress adjourned.

The commission operated with only four functioning officers and, therefore, was unable to hold any hearings for lack of a quorum.

The Comelec still has to settle about 700 pre-proclamation cases, which have to be resolved before June 30.

Commissioner Borra admitted that the lack of commissioners has been a problem since work had to be divided among the four remaining commissioners.

GMA in Ilocos Sur to wish Chavit a happy birthday

VIGAN CITY—Contributing Boss Joe Jose Luis "Chavit" Singson, who was once arrested in the aftermath of President Macapagal-Arroyo 's power in 2001, also gave the incumbent her only win in the Ilocos region in the May 10 election.

In return, Ms Macapagal paid Singson back with her first public appearance since the Congressional canvass gave her back the presidency.

"The politics is over," Ms Macapagal said about 10,000 people who had gathered for Singson's 62nd birthday celebration at his Bantay complex here on Monday.

"A retired fight was fought and both sides should be commended. Here were committed democrats but I will end politically and let the constitutional process run its course," Ms Macapagal added.

The President, wearing a light cream suit, was nonetheless in her speech peppered with Ilocano.

"We will combine the rule of law and the reconciliation process to consolidate our nation and to prepare to meet the tough times ahead," she said. We should get together and join hands and work towards greater prosperity."

She said that in the next three years, "we will have to tuck in the rightist and bring our country to development."

The President also released P10 million as the first tranche of Virginia Ilocano estate taxes for 2004 for Ilocos Sur.

"I would like to thank you for your support in my cause.

We, together with Governor Singson, continue to help each other to give livelihood in the areas of Ilocos Sur," she said.

Joining Ms Macapagal and Singson here were Ilocano Governors Eli, Ilocos Sur Rep. Deogracias Victor "Dingdong" Savedra, Vice Governor Quinto Chiu Rep. Vicente "Bingbong" Crisologo, Provincial Councilor and Associate Bachin Jr., PhilStar Ilocos Luzon Bureau.

RP flag's 'red, blue and yellow' to light up New York City skyline

By Cristina DC Pastor
Contributor

NEW YORK—On the night of June 23, the soul of the Philippine flag will light up the spire of the Empire State Building.

The Filipinos in New York, this event would offer a moment of quiet pride. They would most likely be at work that day or on a commute back home, but some say they would take a moment to gaze at the Manhattan skyline for a glimpse of the familiar red blue and yellow.

"It would be nice to see the colors again," related Lt. Peter Brisco of the New York Police Department. Manila-born Brisco, 44, immigrated to the United States when he was 12 and has made New York his home since.

The lighting of the Philippine colors—from 8 p.m. to midnight—was suggested by the outgoing consulate of Consul Gen. Jacalyn Ysip Bagamasbad, 25, the center in New York last year after graduating from Georgetown University in Washington, D.C. with a degree in International Economics.

Bagamasbad had always been fascinated by the Manhattan skyline. In one of her moments, her husband say she windows and wondered what the colors on the Empire State Building meant. He climbed on the fifth turbine and found the answer. The colors represent the flags of the various immigrant communities that had the city with their energy and influential spirit, including those from Jamaica, Germany, Greece, Israel, France, India, Brazil, Colombia, Haiti and Peru.

Study to bring New York's tallest building, the 102-floor ESB began the tradition of lighting its spire a week before in the 1970s as energy saving in the city's skyscrapers.

Requests had an idea which he pitched to his organization called the Collaborative Opportunities for Raising Empowerment Inc. (CORE) for young Filipino professionals.

It made a little more than two months to get the proposal going, the date settled and finally the seal from ESB. June 23 and 24 have been designated Philippine-Manila Day on ESB's tower lighting schedule. CORE had proposed June 12 in celebration of Philippine Independence Day but that date had already been taken by Portugal.

"The Empire State Building is honored to recognize the Filipino-American community with our world-famous tower lighting," said Lydia A. Bash, ESB's director of public relations spearhead various coordinator.

The 2000 US census counts about 2.5+ million Filipino-Americans, nearly 200,000 of them residing in the New York-Tri-state area. The number represents a 56 percent increase since 1990.

The Philippine consulate is hosting a reception and is arranging a live band hookup to greece and view the lighting from the consulate's Fifth Avenue building. Representatives from the offices of Senators Hillary Clinton and Charles Schumer, D-N.Y., Rep. Joseph Crowley and Mayor Michael Bloomberg have been invited to the reception.

"This will be a monumental event and should make all Filipinos proud. This is a great tribute to the whole Filipino-American community," said Consul General Cecilia Belleza.

BI lawyer suspended for extortion

A BUREAU of Immigration lawyer was suspended when being charged with extorting more than P600,000 from four Filipino nationals who were arrested and deported.

The investigation into the activities of the lawyer was undertaken only after four Ilocanos of the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands—the brother of one of the victims—delivered a privilege speech in the US territory in April where he exposed the extortion.

The lawyer was identified in a press statement as Ernesto Salita of the Bi's law and investigation division.

He was charged with gross misconduct and conduct prejudicial to the interest of the service and placed on 90-day preventive suspension after a fact-finding committee found prima facie evidence in fact demanded and received more than P600,000 from the four deportees in exchange for a promise to work for their release.

Other immigration officers who may have taken part in the extortion will also be charged if the evidence warrants it.

The statement said that on March 31, Salita and a friend again visited the Peninsula allegedly conspired to extort P600,000 from the four detainees.... En parte Gray, Oriel Cajocis, Jesus Lizardo and Brian Reyes...who were arrested by immigration agents for allegedly recruiting Filipinos to work as entertainers in Saipan without work permits.

On April 1, the two again demanded and received P200,000 as "asset loss" from the complainants and, after seven of clay, the two received another P20,000 as payment for facilitating the detainees' early release and voluntary deportation. Marvin d'Orsay

Security Council resolution would test RP's leadership

By Jocelyn Uriarte

THE PHILIPPINES faces a new challenge during its presidency of the United Nations Security Council this month when the body considers a resolution would extend immunity from the International Criminal Court to the United States and other countries that decline to sign the treaty establishing the tribunal.

That is a troubling headache last Friday, RC president Laura Ilga Jr., Philippine permanent representative to the UN, said UN Secretary General Kofi Annan asked him to maintain the "atmosphere of unity" in the council.

The UN chief, Ilga said, cited the recent unanimous adoption by the SC of the resolution on Iraq under his presidency and expressed the hope that the unity in the council would "not be torn apart" when it tackles the ICC resolution.

"This is another challenge which the Philippine presidency faces. I hope we will be able to find a solution that will preserve the unity of the council even as it answers the concerns of the US and those who have reservations about the resolution," Ilga said in a statement.

The US is seeking to renew for the third year a unanimous resolution exempting from ICC prosecution military and civilian personnel whose work is "related to a UN-authorized operation" such as the one in Iraq.

The immunity, which will lapse on June 30, covers 94 countries, including the US, which did not sign the treaty establishing the ICC.

A source at the Department of Foreign Affairs said the Philippines would probably vote in favor of the extension.

Reuters quoted diplomats sources as saying that the United Kingdom, Russia, Pakistan and Angola would back the US.

Chile has announced that it would abstain, which could deprive the US of the nine "yes" votes required to adopt a resolution. The Security Council has a total of 15 members.

The ICC was set up to prosecute the world's worst atrocities—genocide, war crimes and human rights abuses. The tribunal, based in The Hague, the Netherlands, is the court of last resort.

The ICC was set up by the Rome Statute in 1998 and came into being on July 30, 2002, after 60 countries ratified it.

A DAY after the joint canvassing committee of Congress completed its tabulation of election results confirming President Macapagal's victory over her rivals, she is seen in Vigan City in Ilocos Sur (left photo) greeting supporters and at the Mactan Air Base in Cebu City (right photo) saluting the colors.

Steel spikes . . .

From page A1

say minute," Gutierrez said, adding that a wedding was scheduled inside the church at 9 p.m.

"We were running against time," he said.

Explosives and police investigators had suspects in mind, but he refused to provide more details.

Third bomb

The bomb at the Sto. Santos de las Austas parish church was the third to be found in the metropolis since Sunday amid political tension surrounding the disputed May 10 presidential election.

Bomb disposal experts detonated the other day in Quezon City's supreme explosive devices (SED) outside the building of the Department of Interior and Local Government and inside Camp Aguinaldo's compound that houses the offices of the Department of National Defense and the headquarters of the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

"I can safely be surprised that the planting of the two IEDs were deliberate acts to create damage to lives and property," private citizens to certain level of public apprehension," assistant Interior Secretary Rolando Mascardo said in a separate statement.

"We are not dismissing the possibility that the incidents could be part of the destabilization plots *away* which our police and military forces have been in anticipation of," Mascardo added.

He said initial analysis indicated a similarity between the bomb found at the vicinity of the defense department and the one discovered near the interior department.

Mascardo said the bomb was found inside two small cotton boxes near the 2002 canteen, which is a few meters away from the main DND building and the Philippine Veterans' Affairs Office.

The explosive device was made up of assorted fire kilos of ammonium nitrate, an improvised blasting cap, a timing device and a detonating cord.

The device contained in shrapnel, projectiles to disrupt, to threaten that the bomb was not meant to kill or injure anyone.

Road spikes

While security forces were looking for bombs, police also were busy clearing major roads in the metropolis of road spikes.

At least 600 spikes...fashioned from four-inch nails and concealed in paper wrappings...were recovered on Sunday night and Monday morning after they blew out the tires of at least 125 vehicles, according to Metro Manila Development Authority Chair Bayani Fernando.

Fernando said the spikes were strewn on Edsa, U.S. Monumento Circle, E. Rodriguez Avenue, Quezon Avenue, C-5, Aurora Boulevard, Katipunan Avenue, Roxas Boulevard, and A. Bonifacio Avenue.

"The nails were not pinned there as a mere prank," Fernando said. "The aspects intended to immobilize the roads."

Fernando said he was informed that the incidents took place in the wee hours of the morning. "I find the nails been scattered during peak hours, traffic would have been stalled, he said.

Defense Secretary Fernando Reyes said the incidents was part of "destabilization efforts ... by some threateners." PNP Director Reynaldo de Leon, the NCRPO chief, said investigators had no suspects yet, but that there was a general impression that the incidents were politically motivated and that the perpetrators wanted to create anarchy.

MMDA Traffic Operations Center Director Angelito Target declined to estimate the number of vehicles that the nails did not create as severe a damage to cars that the steel spikes scattered on the Edsa Shrine underpass last Sept. 23 when Mr. Macapagal for a flight trip to the United States and Europe. Security forces were placed on red alert then amid reports of a destabilization plot. With reports from Alexis Rupa, Edson Lucas Bandoc Jr., Lalaine del Puerto, Tina Santos, Sara Quismundo, and DJ Bargania

Peso, stocks recover after marathon count

From page A1

victory over actor Fernando Poe Jr.

At the Philippine Dealing System, the Philippine peso surged and finished at 56.160 against the U.S. dollar after the local currency slipped to a record close of 56.40 on Friday. Total value of Monday's trades reached $293.6 million, up slightly from Friday's $271 million.

At the Philippine Stock Exchange, the then-nine-index climbed 7.7 points, or 0.21 percent, to end at 3,548 points. Gainers outnumbered losers, 41-1. Turnover, however, fell to P263.44 million from P366.49 million on Friday.

"This is a relief that finally the uncertainty is over. At the same time, the market's preferred candidate won," said Jose Mozon of AB Capital Securities.

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Rafael Buenaventura said the completion of the count by Congress gave the peso a big boost. "It's not the only uncertainty, but at least now you know there will be a proclamation," he said.

Buenaventura said the peso's recovery was aided by the sale of regional currencies against the U.S. dollar. Yesterday, for instance, the Japanese yen hit a six-week high against the US dollar following reports that the US trade deficit had widened to a record high of $44.04 billion in the first quarter. Economists had expected $41.5 billion shortfall.

The higher-than-expected US deficit has sparked speculations that the US dollar would weaken despite plans by the US Federal Reserve to raise interest rates very soon.

Buenaventura said the peso-dollar exchange rate would be range-bound for the next couple of weeks. "People will still be hedging," he said.

The central bank chief said the focus now, he would next focus on the government's fiscal problems as well as the economic agenda of the new administration.

Worries

Hopes for a big rally in the stock market were thwarted by worries the opposition would try to block Mr. Macapagal's proclamation. Later this week, Senate opposition lawmakers said they would block the submission of the vote count to the Congress' plenary session on Wednesday, thus delaying any proclamation.

"A win for Mr. Macapagal was factored in by the market as early as April when [she] surpassed FPJ in most surveys," Mozon said.

"If her margin of victory is small enough that it raises questions on the part of the losers to say that the market aggressively," he said.

The final tally by a congressional panel showed Ms. Macapagal with 12,905,808 votes, beating Poe by just over one million, for a margin of just 3 percent.

Mozon said the "comfort margin" for the market was a 5-percent win over Poe.

"Investors are still cautious," Edwin Mendoza, an analyst at BDO Securities, told Dow Jones Newswires. "They're waiting for the official proclamation of the winner."

Asiro del Castillo, managing director at First Grade Holdings, said "investors are still waiting for the process to actually cross the line ... for the elected to be proclaimed."

Political analyst Joel Rocamora said the opposition had managed to raise sufficient doubts over the election to undermine the mandate of Mr. Macapagal, making it tougher for her to make a strong move on key areas, such as electoral reform and cutting the huge budget deficit.

Mr. Macapagal, a US-trained economist whose first three years in Malacañang has brought little success in making decisive policy or improving investor confidence, has pledged to create 1 million new jobs a year, install a computer in every classroom and bring cheap power and clean water to all areas of the country.

Analysts said markets were taking such grand pledges with a large pinch of salt and were more focused on the composition of the new Cabinet. They said investors wanted to see whether the government would be disciplined enough to cut debt dependency.

"The overall tariff of the confirmation by the Congress is not really the focus. It's more looking beyond that to see what the cue do to say that this time it's really going to be different," said David Hernandez, head of Asia sovereign research at JP Morgan Chase.

"People are more focused on the discipline that they can see in place."

Raising living standards for the 40 percent of Filipinos who live in poverty is made difficult by a debt burden that is nearly around 100 percent of gross domestic product and that eats up a third of state revenues to interest payments alone.

Right-interest parties, non-traditional opposition, a narrow military and long-running insurgencies by communist and Moro rebels have deterred foreign investment needed to improve dire transport and power infrastructure. With reports from AP and Reuters

Be a gentleman . . .

From page A1

palace," and take defeat as a gentleman would.

"If Mr. Poe seems to profit from my experience," Santiago said in a privilege speech in the House of Representatives, "surely would certainly give its approval."

She suggested that FPJ might have counted or being misled by accepting a government post...maybe the interior and local governments portfolio.

"Because then, he could go to the grassroots level where his electoral support is based," she explained. "He can very easily, for example, canvass the people in the barangays in campaign garbage."

Without this but in the 1992 presidential race, Santiago recalled, she made a career out of losing Freedom Gold Medal as such cries for the 2001 race, "I don't know if that was) convenient to the country," she said.

Similarly, she predicted that Poe's allies would soon disappear when President Macapagal-Arroyo's supporting were of six years was too long a stretch for fading wounds. Instead, she said, "they might hold her now."

She recalled that her own allies lost no time in deserting her and working with Estrada.

What about her previous advice for the actor to go back to making movies? Only if he "appears in a completely esoteric and novel way," she said, "if he goes completely nude, for example."

'A treasure'

Santiago declared that Congress' proclamation of Ms Macapagal's victory, either on Friday or Saturday, was "like a tsunami ... it's inevitable and it will sweep everything across its path."

Last, to add to it, she added in onstage Filipino fashion: "The chances of stopping it are like the chances of a snowball surviving in hell. The only thing the opposition can do ... will be to deliver their farewell-address."

Neither could the Supreme Court halt the proclamation, she said, despite the petition filed by opposition Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile to question the legality of the canvass.

After presenting the statement of the joint canvassing panel, Santiago wondered, why did Pimentel still participate in its deliberations? "Are Pimentel's physical presence and participation as an opponent against him?" she told reporters.

And then she demanded: "If the opposition really believes that Congress is legally dead, why do they continue dressing their sidecar?"

Malacañang would not restrain itself, either.

Carmen Guerrero

The President's spokesperson Ignacio Bunye said in a briefing yesterday that the Palace had not received any letter from Poe on reported plans to proclaim Poe president on June 30.

In fact, Bunye said, the President and other Malacañang officials might vacate the event, although not at the Quirino Grandstand in Rizal Park, "on the Coconut Quezon."

Bunye was not unlike Ms Macapagal's valorous of hard-fought "proclamation" of the qualified presidential candidate Eddie Gil shortly after the May 10 elections, the spokesperson said.

No glowing, please

"Truth" is the word from administration flag, Jose Miguel Salazar of Bukidnon. No glowing, please. Poe, no excessive rowding, he urged also yesterday, as it would lead to be leading protests.

Salazar proposed an answer inaugural for Ms Macapagal, "The government is to defeat, as some recommending to be orders, and this attitude should be transformed on the first minutes of the new mandate," he said. Definitely, "he carnage pulled by a dozen horses, or a ball for thousands." With reports from Gil Cabunoc Jr. and Cynthia D. Balana

Corrections

ON THE front page of Sunday's issue, a story on a lobbying complaint against Fernando Poe's lawyers misstated that "serious illegal detention is now considered a heinous crime and punishable by death, and would only mean the death penalty for offenders."

According to the lawyers, readers' advocate, serious illegal detention is considered a heinous crime only when the victim is raped or subjected to torture or dehumanizing acts.

ON THE front page of the June 14 issue, Amando Doronila's "Analysis" misstated that Senator-elect Manuel "Mar" Roxas II's father founded the Liberal Party in 1946. It was the senator-elect's grandfather—the late President Manuel Roxas—who founded the Liberal Party.

* * *

Readers may send their requests for corrections of factual errors in writing to Letty Jacinto, the editor, Philippine Daily Inquirer, 5th floor, Chino Roces Ave. cor. 6764 Ayala Avenue, Makati, Makati City; fax nos. 897-8700/892-2685; e-mail address: jacinto@inquirer.com.ph; and daily@inquirer.com.ph.

Complaints about lack of fairness or ethnicity may be sent to Raul Pangalangan, readers' ombudsman, the same address and fax numbers as those of the city editor, and e-mail address ombudsman@inquirer.com.ph.

Ex-Erap ally links GMA aide to fraud in South

From page A1

nomination.

Lieutenant General Galang to file charges in the Comelec.

Former Solicitor General Frank Chavez, spokesman of the TF Erap Friend, Garcia, the endgame for ousting, saying the businessman was willing to testify "before any impartial group."

"From all indications, GMA stole 2004 elections. In the face of evidence ..., I could not see how Congress would proclaim a disputed President-Chad. How can a fraud become a president?" said Chavez, who ran and lost in the senatorial race.

To Joe Sison of the Puritos, who also attended the press conference, said his group had yet to study Galang's claims. "I'm not surprised if these were true," he said.

Also present were Lito Sison of the Bangon Pilipinas, which fielded losing presidential candidate Eduardo Gullas; Jimmy Thaksin "Boy" Morales of Jaworski Partido ng Masang Pilipino; Jose "Gangoy" Alonzo, Mamerto Sison, Sonia Bonilla and retired Col. Gerry Carranza, all of The 33 Anti-Fraud.

Galang claimed that Limsiaco, an old acquaintance, called him up in December last year to seek help to contain rising 28 percent of the votes (2 million) in Mindanao, for Ms Macapagal.

January plot

They met twice in January to sweep Cotabato, Dipolog, which, Galang said, was catered by Gutierrez to contain "turbulence" and "victory."

Ms Macapagal eventually approved the plan and no implementation in 17 provinces and two cities in Mindanao, Galang alleged.

Under the plan, treasurers of the Regional Board Auditor be under Arthur Yap, the Department of Agriculture under Secretary Luisito Lorenzo, the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. under the Ephraim Genuino, and the Department of Health under Secretary Manuel Dayrit would be delivered in provinces and cities under their control.

The plan also involved buying off KBP candidates and supporters, and rigging election results through double registration, cheating and re-clustering.

Galang admitted that he was only involved in the distribution of ten in Davao City, North Cotabato, Maguindanao, Cebu City and Lanao del Sur, among other areas.

He recalled postponing the release of P50 million in funds for the vice-district Sultan, but could not say the actual amount released and the number of cards delivered to local government officials. "I was just one of the operators," he said.

Target: KNP leaders

Galang also claimed that he tried to convince KBP leaders to switch sides in Davao City, Davao del Sur, Maguindanao, Cotabato City, Sultan Kudarat, South Cotabato, Sarangani, Davao del Norte and Compostela Valley.

Among those he had allegedly persuaded to sign a pledge of support for Ms Macapagal was Sen. de Guzman, KBP's mayoral candidate in Davao City. "Unfortunately, money changed hands," he said, but he did not elaborate.

Galang said he never asked anything from Limsiaco, except for four one-centavos, a request that, he added, did not materialize. He said he was only given money to be hand-fills.

He said he would have been tapped for the President's campaign because he used to manage a processing plant for banana chips in Mindanao and had links with local leaders.

Galang said he started off the allegations. "He claimed to have recruited many of the KBP local leaders. To convince us that he was able to control KBP leaders, he even showed us signed pledges of support, which we cannot even authenticate as authentic."

"He proposed projects that were minor or limited or unaffected as they appeared yesterday of the Election Code. If he did find a way to do those activities, they were without our sanction or support. Perhaps it is he who should be investigated," he said.

The allegations "reflect desperation by a small sector of the opposition that is now clutching at straws instead of gracefully accepting the will of the people," Gutierrez said.

The President's spokesperson Ignacio Bunye said a media briefing that Galang's exposé was merely a "media hype."

Minority report to show FPJ …

AFTER 13 days of bickerings over election results, the Batasang Pambansa complex silently awaits the final reports of the canvassing by the joint congressional committee.

Junk opposition's canvass petition, SC asked

FIRENTEL

Lawyer Loida Nera, counsel of Senate President Franklin Drilon, said the Supreme Court should not waste time on the petition filed by Senator Panfilo Lacson, which seeks to stop the canvassing of votes for President and Vice President.

"The joint committee is not legally affected by the adjournment of the regular legislative session of Congress," Gonzales said.

Pangilinan added: "[Its] mere(ly) sweeping assertion that the 12th Congress passed out of legal existence' when both houses adjourned … does not entail nothing but puzzling questions and hypocritical musings. It, in part is subtle, misplaced."

In fact, he said, Senate rules allowed the Upper Chamber to reconvene to conduct the canvass at any time it deems necessary, even without the President calling for a special session. The same rules "patently demonstrate the paucity of [Lacson's] pathetic argument," he said, and so the petition should be "dismissed outright."

'Lulizeus' situation

Pangilinan and Bengzon presented a "ridiculous" scenario:

"The terms of congressmen and senators end on June 30. Until then, Bengzon said, they continued to serve in their posts and receive salaries.

If Fitzsimmons's position were upheld, Pangilinan stressed, senators and congressmen in the provincial and province-size districts that adjourned before June 30 would have to "return and refund all the emoluments they received" for the period in between.

Further, he said, the position translated to a "ludicrous situation" in which Congress would have had only three days to conduct the canvass. Senate President Franklin Drilon opened the conference of canvass on June 9, he recalled, and Congress adjourned two days later.

Certainly, Pangilinan said, the framers of the Constitution did not mean for canvassing to do everything—oversee, tally and proclamation of winners—in 72 hours "without sleep or breaks."

Bengzon's personal assessment of the issue: "Kitang-kita na!" (Transcript)

1.1 million votes over Poe, last count tied.

During the canvass, the opposition had repeatedly demanded that the committee open ballot boxes containing the election returns (ERs), or precinct tallies, in areas where alleged fraud occurred.

The committee swept aside the demands, noting the entitlement of canvass (ToCs) it was basing its tallies on did not appear to be tainted with fraud.

Senate President Franklin Drilon said the Congress leadership would strictly enforce the rules when the plenary debates on the canvass results to prevent any attempts to delay the proclamation of the winners.

The plenary session is to start at 2 p.m. tomorrow.

The narrow results also show that Mr. Macapagal's running mate, Sen. Noli De Castro, won the vice presidential tilt.

As in the canvass proceedings, the minority will be given due chance to express its views, Speaker Jose de Venecia said. "But at the end of the day, we will not allow any extraordinary, abnormal or unnecessary delays because we will rest on the joint committee report," he said.

Drilon said the canvass rules set a time limit for congressional members who would speak during the deliberations.

Weapon against filibuster

"This will prevent any move to filibuster," he said in a phone interview, referring to the parliamentary practice that allows members of the Senate to talk for as long as they want or until previous filibuster.

Opposition Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr. resorted to the tactic during the canvassing period.

"It [time limit] will prevent a filibustering because we intend to apply the rules and limit the debates in accordance with the rules, which we all approved," Drilon said in ABC interviews.

If congressional leaders strictly apply the time limit under Section 26 of the canvass rules, the whole proceedings of approving the canvass report should take a maximum of eight hours.

Drilon said that, under the rules, the Floor to speak would be the majority member appointing the joint committee report.

This would be done by Majority Leader Francis Pangilinan and Deputy Speaker Raul Gonzalez.

Procedures

The two will have a combined, maximum one hour to narrate the committee report and the "accompanying resolution … declaring the results of the canvass and proclaiming the president-elect and vice president-elect," according to the rules.

Soon to speak will be the designated minority member, who will give the opposition's reaction to the joint committee report. The minority member has also one hour to speak.

Drilon said three hours would be then allotted for members who want to speak for or against the resolution.

He said that the time allotment could be equally divided by the majority and minority, who would have one hour and a half each to speak.

Likewise, Drilon said, consultants to the presidential and vice presidential rivals who are members of Congress, or their representatives, would be allowed to speak for 20 minutes each.

Heres, he said, Mr. Macapagal, Sen. Jinggoy Ejercito Estrada, Sen. Panfilo Lacson, Sen. Rodolfo Biazon, vice presidential candidate Senator Aquilino Pimentel Jr. Pimentel also will address the Congress.

They should designate a representative, who is a member of Congress, to speak for them.

On the other hand, Senators De Castro, Loren Legarda and Sen. Lacson can address the joint session of Congress.

Sen. Edgardo Angara said the opposition would likely ask Pimentel to deliver the minority's position.

Angara said the minority report would basically touch on what its members had repeatedly stressed during the canvass—that the body should reopen the election returns (ERs) to recall the results of the disputed ToCs.

Angara said the minority would participate in the plenary debates, in effect ruling out talk of a opposition walkout.

Watch out for Digs

"I think we were able to convince the public that they are hiding something," he added.

If he had his way, Sotto said, he would like to see Mr. Macapagal's running mate, Sen. Noli De Castro, "be sworn in" as vice president "as soon as possible."

"It's quite dark," he said, adding that he would be joining the Thursday session" in the House section of the minority report.

"If the (canvassing) process was doubtful, then the results are also doubtful," the lawmaker said.

"That's what we don't want, because if one sits as President, but most people don't believe the process, then that would be another destabilizing factor," he said.

Gonzalez Gaikai. Rodo Gayi said the joint committee's final report might run to at least 50 pages. "It will be out tomorrow (Tuesday) for signature by members of the committee," he said.

De Venecia Jr. said Monday night that President Macapagal-Arroyo would be proclaimed winner on Thursday, as the earliest.

If the debates are protracted, Ms Macapagal will be proclaimed on Saturday, at the latest, he said.

Asked what would happen after Congress had approved the committee's final report, Pimentel said: "Ultimately, the implication is that the majority will have succeeded in running down our throats a flawed report that is untrue, which is not based on the truth which are untried to emerge."

"We will see how the people will accept that," he said.

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Tax fraud witness says Palace task force must go

By Armand N. Nocum

A GOV witness in the P1.3-billion tax credit certificate (TCC) case involving the Chinghoe Group of Companies, has asked that the task force created by Malacañang to go after tax fraud be dissolved, saying it had failed to serve its purpose despite its P2-million monthly budget.

At the same time, a top official in the Office of the Ombudsman yesterday said the immunity granted to couple John and Beatrix Chinghoe—considered the key witnesses in the TCC case—may pressure them to be prepared to testify truthfully in court and their failure to do so would result in their immunity being withdrawn by the Ombudsman.

In a telephone interview, John Chinghoe said that in its four years of existence, the Special Presidential Task Force 126 (SPTF) had reportedly failed to fulfill its mandate, but it could also be involved in efforts to stop potential witnesses from coming forward to testify in court.

"Who will come out to testify if they are harming the witnesses?" Chinghoe asked, referring to the detention chief and executive director of SPTF Inocencio Bocar Jr. and Alan Abercia, respectively.

'So inutile'

Chinghoe said that despite its P2-million monthly budget for a staff of 20, the SPTF has failed to file charges against tax evaders, as well as give the necessary assistance to the Cabinet-level Revenue Integrity Protection Service (RIPS) in the prosecution of tax credit cases before the Sandiganbayan.

"What are they doing there? They are so inutile," he added.

The business tycoon also said that Ombudsman Simeon Marcelo had failed to act on the complaint filed by the Chinghoe Group of Companies, which is now pending before the Office of the Special Prosecutor.

Ombudsman Deputy Special Prosecutor Dennis Villa-Ignacio said that Chinghoe's immunity could be withdrawn if he refuses to testify in court.

"If he refuses to testify, then his immunity will be withdrawn," Villa-Ignacio said.

Chinghoe and his wife Beatrix were granted immunity from prosecution by Marcelo in exchange for their testimony in the case filed against Commissioner of Internal Revenue Guillermo Parayno Jr. and Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) Deputy Commissioner for Legal and Inspection Group Nelly Favis-Villafuerte.

Parayno and Favis-Villafuerte are facing charges of violation of Republic Act 3019 (Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act) and malversation of public funds before the Sandiganbayan.

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Republic of the Philippines
CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION

Policy Guidelines to Govern the Liquidation of Cash Advances and The Penalty to be Imposed for Failure Of an Accountable Officer to Liquidate Within the Prescribed Period

RESOLUTION NO. 04-0855

WHEREAS, Section 27, Article II of the 1987 Constitution provides that it should be the policy of the State to maintain honesty and integrity in the public service and take positive and effective measures against graft and corruption;

WHEREAS, Section 12(2), Chapter 3, Title I, Subtitle A, Book V of Administrative Code of 1987 (Executive Order No. 292) empowers the Civil Service Commission to prescribe, amend, and/or revise rules and regulations to effectively carry out its mandate;

WHEREAS, during the Anti-Corruption Summit of the Civil Service Commission (CSC), Commission on Audit (COA) and Office of the Ombudsman (OMB) held on January 28-29, 2004, the heads of these agencies forged a Joint Anti-Corruption Pact, named as the Saikoa Covenant, and committed to help and support each other to fight corruption;

WHEREAS, the Saikoa Covenant identified the need to streamline and strictly implement the rules regarding the liquidation of cash advances, as this has become a source of corruption in the government transactions;

WHEREAS, CSC, COA and OMB considered as most possible loopholes to monitor and impose necessary sanctions regarding violations of the guidelines on the liquidation of cash advances;

NOW, THEREFORE, the Commission hereby adopts and promulgates the following rules that shall govern the liquidation of cash advances in aggregate amount of FIFTY THOUSAND PESOS (P50,000.00) and above per accountable officer and the penalty to be imposed for his/her failure to liquidate within the prescribed period.

RULE I. PERIOD TO BE OBSERVED FOR LIQUIDATION OF CASH ADVANCES

Section 1. The following periods shall be observed for the liquidation of cash advances per name as stated in Section 5.1 of COA Circular No. 97-002:

1. Salaries, Wages, etc. within five (5) calendar days after every fifteenth (15th) day or end of the month corresponding to a particular pay period or whichever is the regular day for paying salaries.

2. Petty Operating Expenses and Field Operating Expenses - within twenty (20) calendar days after the end of the year, subject to replenishment as frequently as necessary during the year.

3. Official Travel - within sixty (60) calendar days after the return of the official or employee to the Philippines, in the case of foreign travel or within thirty (30) calendar days after return of the official or employee to permanent official station in the case of local travel.

Section 2. In addition to the foregoing periods, all cash advances should be fully liquidated or the total of such are zeroed for petty cash fund.

Section 3. The Head Personnel Agency failure of the Accountable Officer to liquidate cash advances within the periods prescribed herein and after formal demand shall constitute a prima facie case of Grave Neglect of Duty as defined under existing Civil Service law and rules.

RULE II. TRANSMITTAL OF THE COA REPORT

Section 5. Pursuant to COA Memorandum No. 2003-014 (CSC/OMB) Jan. 29, 2004 and other pertinent COA rules, the Supervising Auditor of the agency concerned, after having issued the formal demand to the Accountable Officer who failed to liquidate cash advances within the period prescribed under Rule I, Section 1 of this Rules, shall then submit a report to the Regional Legal Adjudication Director (RLAD), for regional agencies or to the Director, Legal Adjudication Bureau-Central (LAB), for central agencies. The RLAD and LAB shall ascertain the completeness of the documents submitted and immediately transmit the same to the CSC Regional Director concerned for the filing of administrative charges.

RULE III. ACTION OF THE CSC REGIONAL DIRECTOR

Section 6. Within fifteen (15) working days from receipt of the report from the CSC Regional Legal and Adjudication Director (RLAD), for regional outside Metro Manila, and the COA Legal Adjudication Director (LAD) for Metro Manila, in regard to an accountable officer who fails to liquidate cash advances within the period prescribed herein, in formal demand, the concerned Regional Director of the CSC Regional Office concerned to issue a Formal Charge against said accountable officer, evidence noted of a Preliminary Investigation. The proceeds observed in issuing the formal demand and the COA report shall constitute the preliminary investigation of the case. The CSC Regional Director shall forthwith proceed with the conduct of the administrative proceedings pursuant to the Uniform Rules on Administrative Cases in the Civil Service.

The Accountable Officer who fails to liquidate cash advances shall be given the opportunity to present counter-evidence in his/her answer to the Formal Charge, in order to refute the prima facie case made under Rule II, Section 4 of this Rules.

Section 7. The CSC Regional Director may, on motion or upon proper, require the submission of additional supporting documents. He may also require the attendance of resource persons through a subpoena ad testificandum.

RULE IV. ADMINISTRATIVE PENALTY

Section 8. The failure of an Accountable Officer to render an account within the periods prescribed and after formal demand shall constitute the administrative offense of Grave Neglect of Duty punishable by dismissal from the service for the first offense.

RULE V. MISCELLANEOUS PROVISION

Section 9. Effectivity. These rules shall take effect fifteen (15) calendar days from the date of publication in a newspaper of general circulation.

Section 10. Repealing Clause. All other existing Civil Service Commission's issuances that are inconsistent herewith are deemed repealed or amended.

Quezon City, June 17, 2004.

(Sgd.) CORNELIA CONFESSOR-RAVES
Chairperson

(Sgd.) J. WALDEMAR V. VILLARUEL
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(Sgd.) REBECCA A. FERNANDEZ
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Updated drug laws sought

UNDERSECRETARY and Dangerous Drugs Board Executive Director Jose Calida yesterday asked Congress to update the country's laws on the gathering of evidence for a more effective anti-drugs campaign.

Speaking to a senate organ of the US Department of State, Calida said Congress should improve the outmoded laws on wire-tapping which were enacted at a time when there was no wireless communications.

"We instead should have an electronic age-tapping law," Calida said.

The US state department in its International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), said that major evidentiary and procedural obstacles hampered the building of effective narcotics cases in the Philippines.

Calida, meanwhile, said that any law enforcement who "plants" illegal drugs on anyone would be put to death.

He said The Comprehensive Dangerous Drugs Act of 2002, states that "any person who is found guilty of planting any dangerous drug ... shall suffer the penalty of death."

Melvin F. Flores

3 Kuwaiti cops convicted of raping Filipina

KUWAIT CITY—A criminal court on Sunday convicted three policemen of raping a runaway Filipino housemaid while she was in their custody last year, and sentenced them to up to 15 years in jail.

The court handed a 15-year term to Mohammad Palah, and 10-year terms each to Mohammad al-Azmi and Abdullatif Qambar. An immediate explanation of the ruling was not available.

In November, the maid was taken by the Philippine Embassy to the Sabah al-Salem police station to complete paperwork related to her absconding from the house of her employer. She was detained for one night and released back to the embassy. A few days later, she filed a rape complaint.

"I'm satisfied with the decision," the consul general at the Philippine Embassy, Ali Matar Garangan, told The Associated Press. He said the conviction was a "victory for justice."

Lawyer Abdul-Majid Khrafbet said he was appealing the ruling for his client, Palah. It was not known if the other two policemen were doing the same.

Hundreds of domestic helpers from Asian countries, mainly the Philippines, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh, take refuge in their embassies every year claiming physical abuse and lack of payment by their employers. *AP*

Ex-envoy Alconcel dies in Honolulu

TRINIDAD Q. Alconcel, the former Philippine consul general in Honolulu who later served as the country's ambassador to Argentina, died Thursday at his home in Honolulu, Hawaii. He was 89.

"Alconcel was well-loved by the Filipino community in the state of Hawaii for his various efforts to promote greater rapport among community members," said a news release issued by the Philippine consulate general in Honolulu.

Born in Cacoyan, Ilocos Sur, Alconcel graduated cum laude and salutatorian from the University of Manila.

He joined the Philippine foreign service in the 1940s and served with the Department of Foreign Affairs from 1947 to 1956. He was a senior assistant, then chief of division in the department.

He was assigned to Honolulu in 1966 with the rank of career minister and consul general. After being promoted to chief of mission in 1972, he was transferred to San Francisco the following year.

Alconcel returned to Hawaii in 1976 after his wife, Soledad, was diagnosed with cancer.

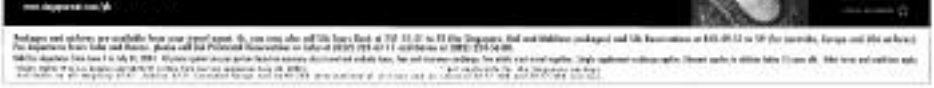
Known for introducing "innovative measures that benefited and gained recognition for the foreign consuls in Hawaii," he was elected dean of the consular corps in 1971 and 1980.

Alconcel's last posting was in 1984, when he served as Philippine ambassador to Argentina, with jurisdiction over Uruguay and Paraguay. *AP*

Betty S. Acuña; 81

BETTY S. Acuña of Pulilan, Bulacan, passed away last Saturday. She was 81.

The widow of former Congressman Mariano Acuña, she is survived by her children Pepito Aguila, Ana, Manoling, Chinky and Tonyboy. She will be buried today at the Sto. Cristo Cemetery in Pulilan.



The WORLD

Editor Lourdes B. Gozon

Iraq militants threaten to behead S. Korean; mother begs, don't

SEOUL—A tearful South Korean mother begged for her son's life Monday as Islamic militants threatened to behead him unless Seoul reversed a plan to send troops to Iraq.

"Please save our son, no matter what it takes," pleaded 63-year-old Shin Young-ja from the southern port city of Busan after watching televised video footage of her terrified son flanked by three masked Iraqi militants.

In the footage the militants threaten to behead translator Kim Sun-il, 33, unless Seoul agreed within 24 hours to send no more troops to Iraq, Kim pleads in English: "Save us address, get out of here. I don't want to die. I don't want to die."

His distraught mother told Yonhap news agency that saving her son's life should come before the plan to send troops.

"Individuals cannot die for the state and there will be no state without people. The government must reconsider the troops deployment and ensure the release of my son no matter what it may cost," she urged.

"I need to think in this past the troop dispatch's fact to take place even when my son was to Iraq for war in such a situation, I think my son must be saved first."

The government said it would do its utmost to win Kim's freedom but refused to yield to an ultimatum to scrap its plan to send 3,000 troops to Iraq starting in August.

Kim's younger sister Kim Jung-sook sobbed as she appealed for his safe return home in time for their father's 70th birthday celebration in July.

"Please return my brother to us so that he can be with us for that day's 70th birthday anniversary next month," she said.

The video footage, first shown on Al Jazeera television, showed South Koreans and gave new ammunition to activists and politicians opposed to the troop deployment for what they describe as an "unjust war."

Some 50 activists rallied outside the presidential Blue House here, chanting "no to the troop deployment" and "release the hostage."

Around 20 liberal lawmakers of South Korea's ruling Uri Party, which led a campaign to introduce a resolution to parliament seeking to have the troop dispatch scrapped, also appealed to the militants to release Kim.

"Such a hostage decision by your group will serve as a great encouragement to the wave of many South Koreans who are opposed to the troops deployment," they said in a statement.

Shin said she had last heard from her son in April when he told her that he was safe and working as a translator for the Gana Trading Co., a South Korean supplier to US troops in Iraq.

A graduate of Hankuk University of Foreign Studies, Kim studied double-major and has been employed by Iraq since June last year as an interpreter for the company, his family said.

He was also interested in doing missionary work in Iraq," said Shin. Kim, her only son and the seventh of eight children, was a devout Christian and also interested in becoming a pastor, she said.

A leading Seoul daily said the abduction of Kim enabled South Korea's worst fears about the troop deployment.

"What had worried us has become reality," said the Munhwa daily in an editorial titled, "Flawed security for Koreans in Iraq."

Under deployment orders, the troops, mainly non-combatants, are to engage in relief work in the northern Iraq and steer clear of conflict.

Kim's abductors said they belonged to the Tawhid wa al-Jihad (unification and holy war) group, led by the al-Qaida operative who Musa'ab al-Zarqawi whom Washington blames for a long list of attacks in Iraq since the fall of Saddam Hussein. AFP

Sr MM Sule Jo, the aunt of Kim Sun-il who was kidnapped in Iraq, holds a picture of her nephew in Busan, south of Seoul, June 21. AP

Iraq premier defends air strike which killed 22

FALLUJA, Iraq—Iraqi prime minister on Sunday defended a US airstrike that killed 22 people in Fallujia, but hospital officials in the town said the dead included women and children and no Iraqis fighting the Americans.

"We know that a house which had been used by terrorists had been hit. We acknowledge this hit on terrorism anywhere in Iraq," interim Prime Minister Iyad Allawi told a news conference.

He said the US military had informed the government before carrying out Saturday's air strike on what it said was a safe house used by militants led by Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, a Jordanian described by the American and Qatada's leader in Iraq.

However, Fallujia's police chief and a senior officer in the Fallujia Brigade in charge of security in the Sunnis area's 6.6 town denied that foreign fighters had operated from the house.

"We inspected the damage; we looked through the bodies of the women and children and elderly. This was a family," Brig. Nasser Aboud of the Fallujia brigade said.

"There is no sign of foreigners having lived in the house.

Zarqawi and his men have no place in Fallujia," he said.

The US military affirmed the Fallujia Brigade, led by former Iraqi army officers, to take over security in the town under a truce last month that ended battles between US Marines and insurgents in which hundreds of people were killed.

The raid shattered a lull in Fallujia and Baghdad's Sunni Arab triangle that formed most of Iraq's US-led occupation on June 30. Reuters

An F-15E3 handout image provided by Scaled Composites, the White Knight carrier aircraft climbs away the Mojave desert with SpaceShipOne attached below it. AP

Private spaceship set for manned flight

MOJAVE, California—A 61-year-old pilot was set Monday to make a historic trip into space by becoming the first business to fly a privately built ship beyond Earth's atmosphere.

Mike Mitchell will command SpaceShipOne, blasting the rocket more than 100 km above the Earth's surface at more than three times the speed of sound, after detaching a mid-air from a transport aircraft that will take off at around 6:30 a.m. in California's Mojave desert.

"I've flattened out from seven years for this," said Mitchell, a native of South Africa who flew the rocket to an altitude of 64 km in a test flight May 13, breaking the record for a privately built craft.

"I'm hoping this will be a repetition, a little higher, a little faster," he said Sunday.

The winged, bullet-shaped white ship was financed only by Burt Rutan, the 61-year-old chief of a company named Scaled Composites LLC, with financing from billionaire Paul Allen, a co-founder of software giant Microsoft. Allen said more than $20 million went into the project.

"The flight is a milestone that may lead to a new space age," Rutan said. "There is an enormous hunger to fly in space and not just in dreams about it."

"The new private space entrepreneurs have a vision," he said. "We do want our children or grandchildren to go to other planets."

Rutan is also eyeing a $10-million prize to be awarded for the first privately funded space vehicle that can carry two passengers and a pilot to an altitude of 100 kilometers in two weeks.

The former X Prize has been offered by the X Prize Foundation, a US-based group, in a bid to encourage widespread space travel. About 23 teams from seven countries are said to be in contention.

"The X Prize is a significant return on the investment, but it is not the reason we are doing it," Rutan said.

In 1986, Rutan, a US engineer, worked on "Voyager" the first plane to fly around the world without stopping or refueling.

SpaceShipOne weighs about three tons and is made of a graphite composite material.

Rutan designed the craft with broad wings and vertical stabilizers that are unnerving the Earth's atmosphere.

"The wings are folded to provide a shuttlecock or feather effect to give the ship extremely high drag for reentry," said Rutan, comparing the entry to that of a badminton birdie.

The craft operates on a hybrid motor that uses both solid and liquid rocket engines.

SpaceShipOne is scheduled to leave the ground attached to the "White Knight," a custom-designed transport aircraft, around 6:30 a.m.

After one hour of flying, at an altitude of 15 km, the "Knight" will release SpaceShipOne, which will ignite its rocket engine and begin a vertical rise.

The rocket will burn for approximately 80 seconds, propelling the craft at straight up at a speed of about 1,300 km per hour, or about three and a half times the speed of sound, to a height of some 88 km above the planet.

Once the rocket's fuel has been spent, the craft will continue upward for some three minutes to reach 264 km, a height at which it will lose speed like a spent bullet.

During this time, the pilot will feel weightless as do astronauts in space. The zero-gravity effect, lasting three minutes, will terminate as SpaceShipOne returns to about 60 km.

The pilot will gradually take control again and from 25 km altitude, the craft will glide for about 13 minutes back to a landing at Edwards Air Base at between 10:30 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. AFP

Confession to Hillary was my worst day in office—Bill

NEW YORK—Bill Clinton's worst day in office came when he confessed to his wife the affair with a White House intern that would threaten his marriage and his presidency, the former president said in a television interview previewing his memoirs on Sunday.

His confession to Hillary Clinton came two days before Clinton was to testify before a grand jury in August 1998 in an investigation that would lead to his impeachment, he said in an hour-long interview on CBS' "60 Minutes" that featured reporters Ed Bradley and Steve Kroft.

"I had a sleepless night and woke her up and sat down on the side of the bed and just told her, said it was awful," Clinton said. The interview was the first to air on television to promote the book "My Life."

"She looked at me as if I had punched her in the gut," Clinton wrote.

The renewed focus on the White House sex scandal may be startling to cost Clinton's presidency.

London's Sunday Telegraph reported that Clinton lost his temper when repeatedly asked about his affair during a BBC program to air on Tuesday.

The Telegraph quoted an unnamed BBC executive who saw the interview as saying Clinton "is visibly angry."

No comment yet, it is not just some flash that is ever in us is—

The remainder is quoted as saying, "It is something subconscious and sustained."

Clinton has kicked off a full-throttle publicity campaign to sell his 957-page memoir, which goes on sale on Tuesday.

Besides the two-hour high profile interviews, a lavish book party for a thousand guests in Manhattan on Monday and nonstop book signings and television appearances throughout the week.

While publisher Alfred A. Knopf has received many orders than the 1.5 million copies of the book's first printing, early reviews were tough on the former president's effort. Reuters

Lewinsky in a July 1998 photo. AP/WIRE

Student writes apology in blood

TOKYO—A Japanese teenager was forced by his teacher to write an apology in blood after during in the classroom, the school's principal said on Monday.

The teacher later went to high school principal Hiroaki Ono and confronted what he had done, Ono said.

The teacher had apologized to the 17-year-old boy and his parents, Ono said, confirming a local media report of the incident, which happened last Thursday.

He said the boy was taken to the staff room of the school in Fukuoka City, southern Japan, after being caught asleep during a lesson. The 48-year-old male teacher handed the boy a box-cutter and paper and told him to write an apology in blood.

The teacher left the student, who then cut his finger and began to write an apology using his own blood.

Other teachers in the staff room did not notice what was happening, Ono said.

"To ask a student to write in their own blood is something I just can't imagine," he said.

He said the boy was back in school, and neither he nor his parents had asked to switch teachers. The teacher involved is expected to make changes in a few days, Ono said.

The incident comes on the heels of an attack in which an 11-year-old girl killed a classmate by slashing her throat with a box cutter, also in southern Japan. Reuters

Guantanamo detentions overvalued, says NYT

GUANTANAMO BAY, Cuba—For nearly two and a half years, American officials have maintained that locked within the steel-mesh cells of the military prison here are some of the most dangerous terrorists on Earth—"the worst of a very bad lot," Vice President Dick Cheney has called them.

The officials say information gleaned from the detainees has exposed terrorist cells, thwarted planned attacks and revealed vital intelligence about al-Qaida.

But of the hundreds of Guantanamo prisoners to rule on the legal status of the 595 men imprisoned here, an examination by The New York Times has found that government and military officials have repeatedly exaggerated both the dangers the prisoners pose and the intelligence they have provided.

In interviews, dozens of high-level military intelligence and law-enforcement officials in the United States, Europe and the Middle East said that contrary to what top officials in the Bush administration officials, many of the detainees at the US Naval Base at Guantanamo Bay rank as lowly or senior operatives of al-Qaida. They said only a relative handful—perhaps a dozen or so—pose a direct threat, others more than two dozen—are senior al-Qaida members or other high-value militants able to elucidate the organization's inner workings.

Because nearly all of that intelligence is classified, those officials would discuss it only on condition of anonymity. New York Times

South Asia rivals now tackle dam

NEW DELHI—A mini water conversation in Indian countryside Kashmir that Pakistan says will deprive its agricultural heartland of water will be the focus of talks between the South Asian neighbors in New Delhi on Monday.

The water summit is from India and Pakistan will discuss the row in two-day talks, which Pakistan officials say is a 1960 water treaty through Tuesday.

Pakistan has raised fears the dam will cut off downstream farmers in the eastern Punjab province, considered the country's food basket. India has allowed to make some design changes to the dam, which Pakistan has rejected.

In January, Pakistan and India met commissioners failed to resolve Pakistan's objections to the Baglihar hydroelectric project, currently being built on the Chenab River.

Ashley Tellis said, Pakistan's ministry for water and power, was flying in New Delhi to meet his Indian counterpart VK Duggal, the bilateral talks could fail by Monday.

Monday's unofficial meeting will be followed by delegation-level talks Tuesday, Pakistani officials said.

Also on Monday, India and Pakistan's foreign ministers were set to meet in the current Chinese city of Qingdao, the first time India's Yashwant Singh and Pakistan's Khurshid Kasuri held direct talks since India's new government took power last month.

Monday's talks on the dam disputes are part of a multi-ranging bilateral between the two countries aimed South Asian neighbors to resolve nearly six decades of hostile relations, which includes three wars. AP

Let's rebuild nation, Ping urges losers

Story continued from A1

in the house.

The smoke of battle has hardly settled, but the victor is not wasting any time in offering peace to the losers.

Council of Elders

The President's political spokesperson, Michael Defensor, said Ms Macapagal was keen on asking Fernando Poe Jr. and her other losing rivals to join a Council of Elders, which would act as an advisory body.

Defensor said back-channel talks with the other presidential camps and political opponents of the President were in progress.

"It will be good to have a Council of Elders where the presidential candidates, if possible, or their people can give the President advice on policy and concept of governance," Defensor said in a phone interview.

"We can work once with this group of 10+1," he said.

He said Ms Macapagal was pushing this as part of her desire to heal the wounds inflicted by the bitter 2004 presidential contest, and forge unity.

"After the election, we know that the President won and she's now reaching out to all," Defensor said.

Palace sources said Ms Macapagal's allies were reaching out to the camps of Sen. Lacson, evangelist Eduardo Villanueva, former Gen. Raul Bonoan and even with opposition Sen. Gregorio Honasan.

Defensor said he expected the opposition, particularly the camp of Poe, to be a little deft, on their other's respective current commission head confirmation by the President's victory.

"But hopefully, they will come to their senses soon and put the interest of the country above all," he said.

He said the proposed Council of Elders would be different from similar councils created by former Presidents Corazon Aquino and Fidel V. Ramos, which focused on the country's economic recovery.

Healing wounds

The Macapagal Council would focus on binding the nation's wounds, he said.

He said representatives of the administration and their friends in the different political camps had been engaged in informal back-channel talks.

"People are already individually doing their jobs. Among the different camps, there is the unification to help out in governance without talking of positions. There is no quid pro quo. On policy level, they are willing to help," Defensor said.

But he declined to give details, saying this would affect the Macapagal's talks.

Defensor even stated that President's promise to give her opponents responsible positions in her administration.

The President's call for unity and reconciliation could be a boon point in her inaugural speech, according to her deputy chief of staff, Rene Velasco.

Speaker Jose de Venecia confirmed the President's efforts to reconcile with her defeated rivals.

Healing process

"We will now reach out to Poe, Lacson, Villanueva and Bono, and to all political parties to see how we can organize a sincere campaign of uniting the country so that GMA can propel the country forward," De Venecia said.

"Soon, the President can reach out to them, including the civil society and party-list groups, to bring together the best statesmen in the country and really begin the healing process," he stressed.

Despite their alliance stories, De Venecia praised opposition legislators for failing to the challenge of statesmanship by allowing the completion of the canvass last Sunday.

He said the canvassing was the most emotional and contentious contest in Philippine political history.

Unlike the president of Taiwan, who won in the last election than country by only 30,000 votes, Ms Macapagal's 1.2 million lead over the runner is "fairly large and decent majority," De Venecia said.

He recalled that the late President Carlos P. Garcia lost to Diosdado Macapagal by 600,000 votes, while Ferdinand Marcos defeated Macapagal, also by 600,000 votes.

Proclaiming winners

In 1992, he said, Fidel Ramos won over Miriam Defensor Santiago by 800,000 votes.

De Venecia said he expected attempts by the minority to delay the proclamation but that, at the end of the day, a joint resolution would be passed proclaiming Ms Macapagal and Sen. Noli de Castro the winners in the presidential and vice presidential contests.

Also because of the "inevitable delay" in the canvassing, De Venecia said he would pursue amendments in the Constitution by strengthening the Commission on Elections to enable it to assume the function of Congress as the National Board of Canvassers.

Another possibility is to create an independent body of eminent figures to carry out the canvassing of the results of presidential contests, he said.

"Looking back in retrospect, a constitutional commission or unenlightened Congress should preside the said presidential and vice presidential [canvass] so everybody in Congress is partisan," he said.

De Venecia said senators and congressmen supported their own candidates and political parties, making it difficult for them to be nonpartisan.

'We did not railroad'

"But let it be not said that we railroaded the canvass, and let it not be said that we did not allow the opposition to question it," he said.

De Venecia said the proclamation of the President by Monday would just be rest only the getting four of a "no-proclamation scenario."

"This we have done. It was a close fight in the sense it was an emotional contest. It was a rough battle but the 1.2 million is fairly large majority," he added.

Senate President Franklin Drilon said he believed that the opposition had saved the way it did during the canvass because it went safely "weaken the President's mandate."

Drilon said the President could counter this by strengthening her new Cabinet, the way Ramos did when he took office in 1992.

He said Ramos, who won the 1992 election by a narrow margin, was able to widen his political base by making the right appointments to his Cabinet.

Weakened mandate

"Whatever tension in her mandate the opposition may have done, by having a strong Cabinet, a credible Cabinet and good programs, she can widen her political base," Drilon said in a news conference.

Reacting to Drilon's assessment, Sen. Edgardo Angara said it was the administration that weakened its own mandate.

"What the opposition did was to unmask their misdeeds—their cheating and attempt at hiding it by refusing to show the election returns," Angara added.

Ms Ma Macapagal, a win a win capacities of opposition claims that she rigged.

When asked whether Ms Macapagal was annoyed by talk of her supposedly tainted victory, her spokesperson, Ignacio Bunye, replied: "How can you be bothered when you won by over 1 million and you have the support of 12 million?"

Bunye shrugged off the opposition's movement Claims of election fraud as "words coming from sore losers."

He said that, unlike her previous three terms, the President would have a "clear" mandate at her own six years to allow and a longer time to implement key economic and political reforms.

An official of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines yesterday appealed to the new administration to give priority to healing the wounds inflicted by the elections.

Cotabato Bishop Dinoguran Dilgan said the biggest concern facing Ms Macapagal, aside from governing, was confidence-building measures. With reports from AFP, Cebu camera by and Rhonda S. Rivera

From 176 to 180 CoCs

By Carlito Pablo

WHEN THEY began work, they said they would create a total of 176 certificates of canvass (CoCs), or provincial vote summaries. How come they ended up tabulating 180?

It wasn't any case of padding but simply a case of bookkeeping communications, reporters were told after the joint canvassing committee of Congress completed on Sunday night the tabulation of votes for president and vice president.

Before the committee started its actual tally on June 6, official advisories said Congress had received a total of 176 CoCs from the provinces, cities, districts and overseas voting centers.

Toward the latter part of the tabulation, the number inched up to 177 after a belated CoC arrived from Cotabato City. It was delayed by the clouds the entire electoral system for seven successful candidates: Rodolfo Biazon and Rufus Rodriguez.

Plus—until Sunday night. That was when the media center at the Batasang Pambansa complex was thrown into confusion when the committee's final tally showed it had actually tabulated 180 CoCs.

Where did the three additional vote certificates come from? vigilant reporters asked.

Lawmakers and poll officials explained that the three CoCs came from some areas of Northern Samar, Maguindanao and Lanao del Sur, where special elections were either held or local canvassing was delayed because of power and/or air conditioning or other factors.

PesoNet Redemption Chart

Points Are Good to Redeem Flights	Round Trip Economy Class Travel	Round Trip Executive/ Premium Class Travel	One Way Economy Class Travel	Companion Round Trip Economy Class Travel
Manila - Davao	2,000	10,000	1,250	1,000
Manila - Dumaguete	2,000	10,000	1,250	1,000
Manila - General Santos	2,000	10,000	1,250	1,000
Manila - Iloilo	2,000	7,000	1,250	1,000
Manila - Kalibo	2,000	7,000	1,250	1,000
Manila - Tagbilaran	2,000	7,000	1,250	1,000
Manila - Tacloban	2,000	7,000	1,250	1,000
Manila - Zamboanga	2,000	7,000	1,250	1,000
Cebu - Davao	2,000	7,000	750	1,000
Cebu - Dumaguete	2,000	7,000	750	1,000
Cebu - General Santos	2,000	7,000	750	1,000
Cebu - Iloilo	2,000	7,000	750	1,000
Cebu - Kalibo	2,000	7,000	750	1,000
Cebu - Tagbilaran	2,000	7,000	750	1,000
Cebu - Tacloban	2,000	7,000	750	1,000
Cebu - Zamboanga	2,000	7,000	750	1,000

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Seacrest Club members can now fly with just half the required PesoMiles from June 16 to August 15, 2004. Call the Seacrest Club hotline near at 1-800-1888-1262 for details. Many Happy Returns

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

OPINION

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Relief

IT'S a relief to see the congressional canvass of votes finally over. But the nation may still have to hold its breath until the new president and vice president shall have been proclaimed and installed in office.

Given a tenacious and creative opposition, anything can still happen between now and June 30. Protracted debates may take place in the joint session of Congress that will discuss the report of the joint canvassing committee. Or some opposition legislators may walk out of the session to demonstrate their protest against the majority report. They may use such a walkout to trigger a mass protest, hoping for a repeat of Edsa II. Or an Oakwood-type of military protest/mutiny may be staged to derail the proclamation of the winners.

EDITORIALS

The pro-Macapagal officials and legislators will have to tread carefully in the next nine days lest they provide the opposition with a casus belli for a huge protest movement. They have just gone through a very trying two weeks of canvassing; a little more patience and tolerance will go a long way in paving a smooth road toward proclamation.

We hope the opposition members will not put up any major roadblocks to the proclamation of the winners. They have said their piece. They have fought a good fight. They have done everything they could do. They may raise the usual observations, comments and objections in the plenary session, but after having their say, we hope they will not take any other action that will aggravate the already volatile political situation. It is the people who will suffer in the event of a political cataclysm.

So far, the opposition has taken the parliamentary and legal route. We hope they will continue to do so and file their protest before the Presidential Electoral Tribunal. That was what Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago did in 1992; that is what a loser in a presidential race can do legally.

The presidential campaign, the election itself and the canvassing have been far from perfect. But the entire political system—no, our entire social, economic and political culture—suffers from many defects. This has to change if we are to accelerate our development. For now, we will have to accept the results of what has been a tightly fought and controversial election. The nation and the world have waited long enough. It's time we proclaimed a president-elect and a vice president-elect so that we can go on with our lives.

Skinning foxes in the chicken coop

VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado

MANILA—"When we agreed, in our 1987 Constitution, to have Congress entrust electronic counts, didn't we permit foxes to guard the chicken coop?"

A friend popped that question after I dismissed, in this place, notes on Britain's runaway counting: "When we rewrote our Constitution, we should revisit the fuses," he added.

Tallies in President Gaston Garcia's term, places that behind its small-time facade, 21st-century media were political heights. Under monster CIA and souk-the Bush-Kerry campaign and of Qatar in Riyadh. Everyone knows arms-racing ratio seems abysmal.

They range sometimes on the megalomaniacal, on 27 acres here of the caravan, on possible walkouts when the plenary finalizes the report declaring President Macapagal-Arroyo reelected. This is administration turf. GMA pulled here 927,384 votes to FPJ's 94,580.

Still, Mike Arroyo's machine is politically lean, an which never realized local supporters. GMA funneled funds directly to barangay leaders.

"That happened to us in Cebu, too," he said. "Gaston Garcia's friends kept tabs on the money." The Guardian fondled the Marcoleans. But all backed the President."

Audio and cell phone practices become here. But cords and many boast 304 Bobol to other points. Gen Rina Jimenez-David's command road security enables swift distribution of newspapers.

We can pick up the boycotts and Cebu Daily News consult Tsitsiyan's scanner for papers, guns. "Congressional hopes for an expanded battle," I wrote, "are dashed." Or so I thought. Then Rolando Nado, who was off for the weekend. "But your terminal is not fit even for pigs."

Comfort rooms were filthy to the hilt, toilet seat wreak. Mud tops the list. Baha is the suffocator.

Life expectancy for Bobolonians is 69 years, two years shorter than for Cotabatan just 100 miles northward and eight years than a Bulgarian's 78. But it is only 52.6 years in Brgy. Bulagan Binangonan's Magsaysaysan. "Life is the threshold at which adversities begin," Hobbes.

There are of every 10 have bank access to improved water it is zeroes in Binangonanese. In Bobol, seven out of every 10 Filipinos, studied Pew, are ill-fed and underweight. The richest percent consume 30 resources out of every pesos. The poorest make do with three centavos, the UN has found.

Bobol is another somewhere between Timor and Indonesia, says the Philippine Human Development Report. Magsaysaysan a sandwiched between Cambodia and Papua New Guinea. Three disparities under a frustrating insurgency.

"Purification of opinion reforms in the lowlands do not screw the main reasons for the upsurge of insurgency in the interior of Bobol in the 1980s and early 1990s," writes Dr. Peter Kwok of New Zealand's International Global Strategy Center in "Philippine Economy Rent." Absence of large numbers of relatively wealthy individuals to the opening frontier in Mindanao—and abroad in the last decade—deprived local social capitalists, writes economist Kwok. "In the Philippines, the Philippine Quarterly of Culture and Society.

This disruption undermined the well-being of local peasants. Preoccupation with fraud who held the contrast hostage for over six weeks of an election is unimportant. There are many more to worry about.

Most will ignore opposition calls for extra-constitutional moves to open a national room they buy, four chest nose bleed. Hi ballooning, a service. They'll monitor the debate and final disposition of the counting of votes. Meanwhile may you assimilate they need to misbehave.

(E-mail: juan_mercado@pacific.net.ph)

'Reasonable regulation'

ALL peace-loving people welcome the Supreme Court ruling upholding a nationwide gun ban declared in January 2003. Now the police have to enforce it strictly to keep the peace and curb criminality.

Former Solicitor General Francisco Chavez, who filed the petition disputing the legality of the gun ban, said that the right to bear arms was a constitutionally protected right. But the Court, in a cogently reasoned decision, said it was not. It pointed out that the Philippine Constitution has no provision similar to the Second Amendment of the US Constitution that says, "A well-regulated militia being necessary for the security of the free state, the right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed." The Court said such a right referred to the collective right of those comprising the militia and not to the individual rights of citizens to bear arms.

The ruling does not prohibit people from keeping firearms in their houses for their protection. Neither does it do away with the practice of issuing permits to carry firearms outside of residence. But such permits are given only to qualified persons or those who have valid reasons for carrying guns outside their homes. This is "reasonable regulation," the Court concluded.

To be sure, the gun ban will not entirely prevent the commission of crimes perpetrated with the use of firearms. For one thing, the New People's Army will continue to use firearms, gun ban or no gun ban. But the gun ban will make it easier for the police and the military to spot criminals and outlaws. Those who carry guns either have to be in uniform or have to produce permits to carry. If they don't have permits to carry, they face arrest.

The Court has rendered a decision that will help improve the peace and order situation in the country. But the police will have to do its part by issuing permits to carry only to those who are qualified or who, for their own security and by reasons of their work, have to have such permits.

Lobotomized

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

Banks demolishes Greg dean. "[He was] in effect confined to a single moment—the present"—uninformed by any sense of the past [or future]..... Some sense of ongoing, or 'now,' is always with us. But this sense of movement, of happening, of 'now,' is not the same as the present. It becomes the 'remembered present,' as well as being given potential and tension by the future, but Greg, it was fair and [to] its men. [It] was [the] present-moving and-inputs by the past [future, it becomes the 'remembered present'],

Reform canvass system

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

LAST Sunday, the opposition made a last ditch effort to stall the canvass when Sen Aquilino Pimentel read a letter from Sylvia Villanueva, who came to Sen 6) the last election, asking the joint committee to allow the opening of election returns from three places shown by the opposition, "in the interest of transparency." He interpreted motion carried when there was none down, to the last four certificates of canvass and, as a House member who tallied the results of those COCs noted, they were not enough to alter the one million-vote lead of President Macapagal-Arroyo (Pimentel's motion was supported by Senators Miriam Defensor Santiago, Juan Ponce Enrile and Sergio Osmeña, as well as alternate panelist Rodolfo Biazon, J.V Ejercito).

* * *

Committee chairs Ernesto Pangilinan and Raul Roco also allowed the opposition discretionary but time to come up with computer-generated tallies. Senator Roco noted how the election hall from his office upstairs and wondered with other majority leaders. The committee was then to have an appreciation period to open the "Pandora's box" as Gonzalez had earlier termed it. This was ultimately not, limited when Osmeña said that if it's tough for the majority to answer it, there would also come a time for the opposition. Ejercito made a similar observation. This surely weakened the administration line broadside, for what the "absolutely of demand" is open file, and then quickly rated it down.

* * *

In nothing the opening of IBs in cases where COCs have signs of alternation or erasures, the opposition managed, as Sen. Alter Arroyo put it, to somewhat "ease" GMA's victory even though their main objective is to delegitimize Macapagal-Arroyo. The 9-4 allies (Osmeña was tempted to throw back the final change in the 8)9)Joseph Estrada's and 0)1 Estrada's as Barzaga Ejercito, Balanon, Jalosjos and Sotto) friends. Something like, Arise, Joseph Estrada, you are not the mastermind! If he 8-4 to assert that would have only emboldened GMA to press for the opening of the IBs. And that would have been a big disadvantage for E-4 as GMA was not only leading in the canvass, she is also a sitting President.

* * *

However, opening the IBs would have resulted in no proclamation since the Constitution gives Congress just a month to complete its task.

* * *

Cabinet-in Joaquin Bernas put the dilemma accurately when he said that "the purposes of certainty and accuracy can best be served by using recent" be the Election Tribunal. But prolonged canvass would be the price to pay. If this is what to do about, then the canvass motion must be changed to open the floodgate of returns." In view of this dilemma, he said that perhaps elections should be held at least six months before the beginning of the next presidential term, not be currently sandwiched how many people would favor this.

* * *

This dilemma was uppermost in many minds last Sunday night as the canvass wound up. Rizalde Mercado, who broke Ninoy Aquino's election victory in 1978 after the 1986 EDSA Uprising, seemed to have supported his appeal for the opening of IBs in three places, apparently had a change of heart. This was after it became clear to the Cebu archbishop, as Sens. Moreno Osmeña and Antonio Nachura, who spoke to him that evening, explain to me, was this, that opening the IBs would immeasurably delay the canvass and produce greater instability than any questions about accuracy.

* * *

As the lawmakers wound up the canvass, many realized the big need to reform the process. Alabama's Rep. Dreis Beasley shared with me "new systems" she had learned, that "never again" should we have a second count, and that constitutional amendments are immediately needed to take the canvass out of the hands of a highly politicized body such as Congress.

* * *

By the way, Beasley missed a stir when she pointed out that some party-list groups also benefited from the dangling house-to-canvass that the opposition had accused of the majority coalition of tinkering. During the canvass of the Lanao del Norte COC, 1)1 Bayanihi had obtained 8-4 and GMA-Lite allegedly cheating PPJ. Besides they disclosed that among the three party-list groups which have filed cases against the 2004 elections, Bayanihi had termed the "historical" dagdag-bawas ways in Lanao was barbaric, whose original votes of almost 1,000 appeared as 7,000 in the CoC.

* * *

Johny "President's Digs" in the latest issue of Malacañang, former Senate President Jovito Salonga described the phenomenon in the last election that was Eddie Villanueva. He noted that though the Jesus is Lord crusader "fought the good fight and finished the race," he got his campaign of moral righteousness," a number of his followers do not vote for him since they "do not want a theocratic state, like Iran, independently of the unconstitutional provision establishing the principle of separation of Church and State." Salonga also said that after the election, Villanueva's "weakness" would be exposed. He lost in his own precinct in Bicutan, where he ran, who was running for mayor, also lost, as well as in his home province of Bulacan and Central Luzon. Salonga also noted that a day after the election, Villanueva asserted on TV that there was a "failure of elections." He immediately advised Villanueva not to repeat that "obvious error" for after all, the five presidential candidates were all in 100; without difficulty in fact it was relatively polling places.

* * *

On May 31 and in the following days, however, Salonga noted, Villanueva made several references to the "massive and nationwide disenfranchisement of voters." When Villanueva proclaimed that the "electoral contradiction" of a sweeping condemnation from which the truth will have to be fronted out, the explanation it averted was that Villanueva's lawyers made brought those statements. God calls: "Elect Salonga, "if he was already a president, that kind of explanation would not pass muster. A president signing an important public document or the same says so that lawyers would be a source of national embarrassment and danger to the state."

My mother, my father

YOUNG BLOOD

John Paul Galang

My secret is I have asked the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? The welcome contributions from the twenty-something and below —Ed.

I DON'T know my father. I haven't even seen him. I certainly have one, but he left us before I could even recognize him. He had probably begged, kissed and cursed me one time. Maybe he whispered something to me before he disappeared. I don't know and will never know.

I was only two years old when my parents separated. That's what my mother told me. She was left with five of my siblings to raise. Ma-

my duties will not why or how they separated, only that my father had gone abroad and didn't come back.

She had a lot of stories about his womanizing and using other children. And that was perhaps why I didn't miss him. But how he could totally abandon us all, including his other families, and live somewhere unknown to us is still a big mystery to me.

Despite all this, I cannot recall a single moment when my mother cried or showed any bitterness. Somehow she just managed to live with the fact that Papa had deserted us and so it seemed okay to me as I grew up. But as a kid, I remember being envious when I would see a policeman whom I grew up as the father I could trust my parents about my father when I saw him. I realize now that I didn't really mean it, but then everyone laughed whenever I made that threat.

When I went to school and had to fill up forms or answers a question asking what my father did, I proudly wrote that he was a farmer. That was what my mother told me and I thought that it meant to be a simple profession because my classmates' fathers were doctors, teachers or businessmen. Later, my mother told me to just write "deceased" so that no further questions would be asked. Well, I also thought he might be dead for we had never heard from him.

Why am I talking about him right now? See, it is not because I want him to show up or I remembered him on Father's Day. I don't think I do much to entertain his fame because I'm not having a father. Besides, he may be very old now and he's not to take care of him for the rest of his days on earth. Shame on him if that happens.

He certainly has nothing to do also with the Father's Day celebration for he had not been a father to me and to my brothers and sisters all of our lives. To recognize him would be unfair to my mother and to the others who have sacrificed a lot and would somehow even more to see their family live happily and prosperously.

I'm writing this to pay tribute to someone who took the place of my father from day one and has done so unfailingly and wholeheartedly until today. That someone is my stepfather, who is my mother Celita or Mudang Lita to others who know her.

She is one who provided us everything we ever had. She had no regular job but with the little money she got from our relatives in return for some services, she was able to provide us with necessities and things that allowed us to live life normally. All that kept her going was her love for us her children. She derived strength from her desire to see all of us grow properly into adults. Perhaps my father possessed some of her virtues and that's why God left us to the hands of my mother. And I thank Him for leaving us in very good hands.

And so allow me to tell the whole world how great my "father" is. It is for you that the day was made: Happy Father's Day, Mama!

Glued

I BELIEVE one of the most closely watched programs on television in recent weeks were not the telenovelas or talent search shows featured on local channels. In terms of drama and excitement, they were simply no match to watching the battle between the fans' favorite Los Angeles Lakers and the "Bad Boys" of the Detroit Pistons in the NBA Finals and, of course, the ongoing caravan of votes in Congress. These two shows provide lively servings of live entertainment to satisfy the Filipino's insatiable appetite, albeit in contrasting ways.

Consider the following:

While the Lakers and Pistons were engaged in an "all-in-one, no-talk" struggle on the basketball court, our lawmakers were busy with their "all-talk, no action" board in the halls of Congress.

While the Lakers and Pistons were stopping each other, one and defensive plays to score points, our senators and congressmen were creating offensive and defensive tactics to stall the proclamation of the winners.

While the Lakers and Pistons displayed "grace under pressure" as they vowed to reach their separate goal of winning the championship, our administration and opposition lawmakers became a disgrace to watch as they pushed hard to control the outcome of the election.

While the Lakers and Pistons garnered their Rings and praised the other's outstanding game after a loss and promised to do better next time, our honorable ladies and gentlemen in the legislature accused each other's political party of cheating and accused of fighting in the streets if things didn't turn out they they wanted them to.

While the Lakers and Pistons were transforming basketball into a grand exhibition of world class skills, our legislators were busy showing their inferior class.

While we could be certain that either the Lakers or the Pistons would be crowned NBA champions before the middle of the month, we were not as sure as to whether the senators would head to the proclamation of a president by June 30 as mandated by our Constitution.

No matter how different the two games were, we nevertheless seemed to enjoy watching them. They were authentic reality shows that commanded our undivided attention.

Politics and sports are truly two of the things Filipinos are most passionate about. And for sure, each one of us has our own two cents' worth to say about them.

But if your asked me which team would win the NBA championship before the series ended, I would have said the Pistons because of their defense. But as for the television caravan of votes, for a while there I feared it would end in a stalemate.

I think I have said enough. Now, where did I put that remote control of mine?

John Paul E Galang, 25, works at the Bureau of Communications Services attached from Lusong, Northern Samar.

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Music across the miles

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

FROM MY "faithful correspondent" Babes Ignacio in Seattle, Washington, comes news of the perfect reunion last month of that American trio of Charlie La Salle University—Chorale.

LU Chorale, an offshoot of the Greater Washington Alpha Phi Omega and the UP Alpha Phi Omega Foundation (of which Ignacio is president), which helped bring the LSUH Chorale to the US for a concert tour in 1989, has apparently remained many things. Foremost of which is that "the fourteen Filipino groups can, at least for the duration of the performances, unite in friendship to appreciate the arts—a sublime spectacle of harmony and unity among people of different cultures, arts and music with their peers, other choruses, singers, Filipinos and the mainstream."

Last May 19, the LSUH Chorale raised the participating choirs to fourteen, joining the LU Chorale and the Philippine Madrigal Singers, which, the last number, consisting of songs in Tagalog and Ilocano. So impressed was the UE Chorale's director, says Ignacio, that she asked for the arrangements of "Ang Suman (Our Father)," to add to her group's repertoire.

The visitors from the Philippines had another chance to engage in cultural interchange the next day, this time with the Chorale of the Ballard High School, a prestigious institution that is every year the source of the UW Chorale and their director, Rodolfo Tobiansing, held a session with the visiting family and staff of the University of Washington, an intimate performance that moved many to the audience to tears.

* * *

REMINISCENT of the chorale's visit, though, was the gala performance on May 21 at UP's Kare Kare Hall.

As soon as the chorale started its performance with mostly Filipino songs, Jaffa folk songs and OPM, writes Pimentel, "the effect was pure delight everybody. The audience almost applauded after each chorale that everybody, even the children, sat up and sang along."

Before leaving Washington for the remainder of their tour, the LSUH Chorale performed at the Holy Family Church in West Seattle, singing during the regular Tagalog Mass. After the Mass, Buffy Ignacio introduced the members of the chorale who then treated Mass goers to a short program of spirituals and songs.

Through bidding the young people goodbye with hugs and tears, writes Babes, the Ballard community proved their compassion and began to host each one as their own children and grandchildren, the Filipino organizers in Seattle could not help but feel a great sense of pride in the LSUH Chorale, for having been "more than a model of grace to spread their gift to the rest of the world."

From Seattle, the LSUH Chorale proceeded to Dallas, Chicago, New York and Boston for more performances, and then was scheduled to fly to Stockholm, Sweden and the rest of Europe to participate in competitions. "The least we can do is to wish them luck and God speed," writes Buffy.

We can add to that, but turn mum; we can support efforts like theirs to spread the very best of Filipino culture in the US and the rest of the world.

* * *

SYDNEY(SG) of Filipino-owned, Filipino parents of minors have elevated are raising a howl about a new "policy" of the Bureau of Immigration and Deportation (BID) that limits a few of 9), 12D on a child seeking entry into the Philippines unaccompanied by both parents.

The exchange of indignant e-mail began with the account of Elin Bacani who accompanied her four-year-old granddaughter Gabrielle to Manila last January. They had taken the flight some of the necessary documents, including Gabrielle's US passport, birth certificate, a notarized affidavit from her mother (Bacani's daughter) giving her consent for her daughter to travel with her grandmother, mother-in-law and affidavit from Bacani stating her ability and willingness to provide for all of Gabrielle's needs while in the country. Her mother couldn't travel with her because of a previous engagement.

All these documents, however, were ignored by BID officials who refused to allow Gabrielle to leave the immigration line at the airport and kept them inside a windowless office. There, they were told that Gabrielle fell under the "exception" to those granted the status of "habitual resident" in the Philippines and therefore, "subject to the usual requirements" (i.e., documents required by or not coming to a passport." Such children, however, could be admitted at "the discretion of the Commissioner," but apparently only in other payment of the fee.

* * *

TO MAKE things worse, upon their departure on Feb. 4, Gabrielle and her mother were once more stopped at the immigration line and were charged P12,500 because Gabrielle had been "overstayed" her visa, which had been stamped Jan. 22 even if her ticket showed that she was not to depart on Feb. 4.

Gabrielle's mother refused to pay and recounted on her experience by the US Embassy, which issued the passport that Gabrielle "overstayed" I'm if doing but a personal favor" I and allowed them to board their plane without paying the "fine."

The account of Gabrielle's experience is supported by the experience of another half-Filipino, whose son Andy, a better citizen, was also required to pay the fee when he arrived in Manila accompanied only by his mother's maternal grandparents. Andy's mother wrote: "If we are holiday-ers, but our children are not allowed to enter our country, how can we send our children there to learn about their origin? How is this going to help promote tourism?"

Whether or not this is helping anyway? And why, if it is, no one seems to know about their origin? How is this going to help promote tourism?

Whether or not this is helping anyway? And why, if it is, no one seems to know about their origin?

A picaresque tale (III)

SENSE AND SENSIBILITY

Ruvelli L. Harper

DURING MY conversations with Don Ambrosio Guinness, I deduced that he was completely discouraged with the state of things and was afraid of the consequences that prevailed from the beginning, namely, that the lack of a formal agreements with the Americans would lead, sooner or later, to friction. On top of this fear was added the preoccupation of a deep distrust that had to arise owing to the Filipinos due more than anything to Aguinaldo's eagerness or, better said, due to his arbitrary fluidity, to embrace all those who were Mexican. From there on the existence of three rule was observed that would undermine the revolution. These were the Americans with their ideas of liberty, the partisans of all the Catholics and the belief of the old members of the Katipunan that they were the only ones called to lead the future of the revolution and more importantly the nation.

This series of the worst but once these elements came together, it seemed that they would go to other provinces with the rank of chiefs of expeditions attended in them or as simple adventurers they believed themselves owners of lives and hacienda and committed all kinds of abuses. These three rule engendered the consequences that later would surprised.

Gen. Antonio Flores was also in Cavite at this time and had under his side and maintained a relative of mine, Mariano Queit, an old official from the Spanish regimen who had joined the revolution. Flores was supposed to have been named secretary of state but for reasons that were never explained to me the position was given to Isidoro Aguinaldo.

I had been warned that there was trouble being fomented against me by certain factions, not only for having acted against many of Mabini's directives but also for my opposition to their attempt to play ball against what I felt were introduction of influences too radical in all aspects of government.

I walked to the house of my brothers who lived in Binondo and there I found my wife and my children prepared to leave for Cavite the next day at dawn. That same night, my wife gave birth between midnight and one o'clock and that was my excuse to remain with them in Manila.

I mentioned previously that toward the 30th of June while I was in Cavite, Aguinaldo received Admiral Dewey who was asking permission for his troops to disembark. This was the formation of volunteers of California under Colonel Smith and the battalion of volunteers of Oregon. They would stay at Fort San Felipe, and the other at the arsenal.

After two or three days in Manila, the first time that I was in my residence in the expedition in Cavite passing through Malapalon and who had assured me that he was visiting his family in Malabon came to see me. He invited me to dine at Casa de Lala and here he posed the question of the future relations between the United States and the Philippines. He asked me if I knew of any agreement between the two countries. I answered in which I replied that I was completely ignorant of any existing written document. He confessed that he didn't think so either.

One of the objectives of his trip to Malolos, he said, had been to see the first Asian cabinet whom there was anchored in the bay. The former had commissioned him to search for a person who would communicate with the Germans in the event that the Americans did not conduct themselves in the Filipinos expected. They could reckon on in the events that were developing. I replied that I was not aware of any agreement between the three but what I could do was inform Aguinaldo of his proposal.

The events that Vicente Lukban had narrated referring to the intentions of the Americans of wanting to utilize the Filipinos in order to take over in the future was true. Later I learned that Aguinaldo had abandoned the plans of Cavite upon the suggestion of the American military chief and had transferred to Bacoor. This prompted me to write to Aguinaldo through Vicente Lukban to inform him of the two proposals.

(To be continued.)

* * *

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Mechanism to resolve election protests with optimum urgency needed

[illegible] our slow electoral justice system for the indifference of many losing candidates, who believe they have to an election, to filing an election protest. In this country, alas, one is yes to hear of one that was resolved promptly. Such process are usually resolved when the contested seat is about to expire.

Almost everyone is familiar with this irony. The sad fact is, as one of the past victims of an alleged election irregularity, some of whom are reputable legislators, has even managed to remedy this awful ills in Philippine politics.

The wheels of justice in this country are obviously excessive for grinding exceedingly slow.

In a certain sense, one can realize that ordinary voters were may really take stock time to bargain, considering the qualifications, desire to lead, worth or integrity, and the many related fears and preparations to tinker with.

But an election process should be comparatively less drastic or cumbersome. It is reasonably a function of simple arithmetic. If machines are able to count overnight the votes cast after an election, it is paradoxical that a recounting of the votes subject of a protest, albeit perhaps in a relatively larger scale, does take said long days even—or recall the final results had become moot and practically useless... as exemplified.

To associate the clear will of the electorate with opulence as proof is among the hallmarks of real democracy. I believe an enabling law prescribing a reasonable deadline to resolve an election protest is what we dearly need. Given such a law, I am sure Fernando Poe Jr. and his allies would have just calmly preferred an electoral protest rather than resort to exasperating resistance... (one—even obviously valid and reasonable, though some are so obviously so)—in the ongoing congressional canvass of the presidential and vice-presidential votes. Then, Emilio Macapagal-Arroyo and Noli de Castro would have been proclaimed for sure, and the likelihood of a constitutional crisis exploding on June 30 would have been effectively nipped in the bud.

—BOBBY L. CORDERAL,
[illegible]

Gender-insensitive' legislators

MANY media commentators, the various versions of the public have had their say on the canvassing in Congress. Words, the proceedings have been very democratic, considering their many matters... particularly our politics—less motivated perhaps.

When male legislators raise their voices to the microphone to give our objections after objections to the proposed rules of the canvassing, Speaker Jose de Venecia and Senate President Franklin Drilon, as ex-officio of the proceedings, never miss a beat, adamantly judging each one of them as the "disorganized gentlemen" from this or that province. But when Akbayan Rep. Risa Hontiveros and Bayan Muna Rep. Satur Ocampo asked to be recognized for the chair, the Speaker hesitated and muttered "the disorganized gentlemen" to acknowledge her. The phrase "the disorganized gentlemen" is not exactly kind to my ears. In doubt it would have been proper for the Speaker to have said her and the co-chair may do so in the future? "the disorganized representative" or the "the disorganized lady." In any case, the phrase "the disorganized representative" can apply to both male and female members of the Congress, is a more "politically correct" and appropriate for

their positions as elected officials, and is more gender sensitive.

The members of Congress themselves can address each other as such, as an emotional term of endearment and embrace in their work.

There was also an instance in the congressional canvass where Sen. Loren Legarda asked to be recognized, but was initially refused by the Senate president, due to lack of time, as other senators having been acknowledged before her. The argumentation that was supposed to speak before her chance (privilege) to be in favor of the second motion to be made by "senatorial lady senator" "after happened to the "disorganized" part?

Lastly, since the joint committee consists of a ten panel made up of men, I would suggest to every body, including the media, to call it either a "10 person" or a "10 member committee," instead of a 10 man committee.

It would be better if our constitutional representatives would follow what they preach (or as also case, what they do) by being more gender sensitive and by promoting gender equality. Using politically correct terms would be a good start.

—[illegible]
[illegible]

PinoyPress welcomes 'corrections'

THE INQUIRER's decision to declare a regular space for a "corrections section" is commendable. It's about time the country's dean of National newspaper did this. The section is a concession on the publication's morality and notion of responsibility to the public.

My only wish is for the other newspapers and media companies to follow the Inquirer's example. The Inquirer is an obvious as it is big—all our newspapers have a duty and a responsibility to correct their mistakes. They also have a duty and a responsibility to themselves, as their credibility is at people's credibility.

Newsprint—an online source of news for Filipino journalists, which I was—has been providing Philippine media for a number of years now. The site has been criticizing media companies for not correcting their errors promptly and sufficiently and it has been urging these companies—the biggest among them—to be more responsible in their reading.

Considering the sheer number of errors being committed in the print every day, the absence of a consistent and sufficient corrections policy is dismaying. I don't know whether there's a connection among editors and media owners to own up to their mistakes, or whether this is just a case of journalistic mischief or, God forbid, incompetence.

In any case, it is heartening to see the Inquirer doing the right things. Fine, is appointed an ombudsman. There is required by corporate to correct their mistakes in their columns—now in the "corrections section" and not in the "letters section" and not in the "letters section" and not in the [illegible] column. Now, this.

As far as I am concerned, the paper's credibility has gone one notch higher.

—CARLOS B. CONDE,
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The architect of Letran

TO A NEWS article about the Letran main building in Colombo, Legazpi (PDI, 4/19/2004), let me add a few notes. The architect who designed the building (and the St. Raphael, St. Gabriel, St. Michael and St. Joseph wings) was Fr. Pompeyo de Moret, OP, then rector and president of Letran, Manila. His biggest edifice was the Escorial in Madrid, Spain, which he supervised during the years as a scholar of the Philippine government in the Universidad Central. As a young priest on the mountains of Mindoro, his design love—from the monumental dimensions of the Escorial could possibly stand up against the typhoons blowing in the background, according to him.

Architect Imperial is better known as a restoration architect of landmarks. It was during his job on the "walls" that he discovered the Letran link. He also found out that the Letran ladies are the owners and shapes in Letran, Calamba, and a Spanish gate at the back of Letran, Manila (fronting Padre Rafael St.).

—ALFREDO MANO-AMPIL,
[illegible]@[illegible].com

How WW II was won

I READ with great interest retired Gen. Ramon J. Revilla's column titled "The longest day" (PDI, 6/13/04) relating to Lieutenant Gen. Masaharu Homma's decision to visit the grave of General Douglas MacArthur's father in Baguio. Considering the humiliation he suffered at the hands of Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower, the supreme commander of the Allied forces in Europe, on the historically troubling, it was a good thing that the German field marshal attended the celebration of his wife's birthday on the very day of the invasion. Otherwise, the invasion would have been catastrophic for the combined US and British armies. As Rommel was the "greatest German general" in World War II.

For the younger generations and those who did not see "The Longest Day" and "Saving Private Ryan" on wide screen, the following timeline gives them an insight into the defeat of the Axis powers, which was composed of Hitler's Germany, Benito Mussolini's Italy in Europe and Emperor Hirohito's Japanese Empire in Asia. The only Axis, it made our young generation aware of how World War II was won.

—[illegible],
[illegible]
[illegible],
[illegible]

People are tired of political nitpicking

I still would have thought that after a bitterly fought election the "honorable" politicians charged with the canvassing of votes would show some signs for an embrace, the moment of parting as with their rank with [illegible] and sincerity, they engage in nitpicking chiefly aimed at delaying the canvass of votes for vice-president and vice-president, very arduously, not people are sick and tired of the antics of the opposition. We can't afford such cantankerous attitude on the people's dignity and self-respect.

—[illegible]
[illegible]

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Across the NATION
Assistant Editor Tony Bergonia

DENR says Sierra Madre forest all but wiped out

LUCENA CITY—Logging in the Sierra Madre is on its way to wiping out all trees in the mountain range, an envi. ronment official said.

Jairoh Rocha, provincial environment and natural resources officer, said loggers were now cutting smaller and younger trees since they could no longer find mature trees.

"The circles that we've been coordinating nowadays is getting smaller and smaller," said Rocha. This meant that no more mature trees are left to cut in the mountain.

Rocha, in a briefing for some members of the provincial board, said the loggers had stopped using chainsaws and had gone back to "the basic axe and hand muscle."

Federico Dumpit, community environment and natural resources officer in northern Quezon, said well-funded loggers were not the only ones engaged in timber poaching in the Sierra Madre.

He said the Department of Environment and Natural Resources' campaign against illegal logging had hurt big-time loggers.

"But sad to admit, most people of the present breed of illegal loggers are the destitute residents—farmers/ers," he said.

Abject poverty has driven residents living on or near the mountain to cut trees in order to survive. "What is at stake is the family's life and death battle for survival," he said.

The availability of cheap labor has brought down the price of illegally-cut log to P3 per board foot from more than P20 per board foot. He said the share of the actual cutter is a pittance," he said.

In Real, Quezon last week, Rep. Rafael Nicolas and Bishop Julio Labayen, retired head of the Prelature of Infanta, formed the Tayo Coordinating Council-Natural Nature Chapter.

Nicolas said the dressing of Tipan, a Church-based multisectoral group in northern Quezon, sought to help stop illegal logging in Dotted Sinkan trees in the Sierra Madre.

"We fully understand the social dimension of the illegal logging issue. With Tipan and the assistance of different governments agencies, we would be able to face the problem head-on," said Nicolas.

He said he would tap the services of government agencies in their efforts to stop logging in the mountain range.

Board member Bernardo Arellanada, also the incoming mayor of General Nakar, had admitted that almost 60 percent of the town's inhabitants depended on illegal logging for a living.

The provincial council adopted a resolution that would create a special committee composed of officials of the province, DENR and leaders of nongovernment organizations and environmental groups to strain the crackdown away from logging to other forms of livelihood.

Kidapawan folk feel crunch of high prices

KIDAPAWAN CITY—Two kilos of rice and a kilo of galunggong is all P100 could get here.

And for 29-year-old Rowena Bingal, a resident of Barrio, P100 does not go a long way.

"Even for food alone, P100 is not enough. I still have to buy milk, sugar, salt, vegetables and spices," she said.

Bingal said her family consumed two kilos of rice alone per day.

What aggravates the problem is the never-ending increase in prices of other commodities, she said.

Bingal, whose husband works in a rice mill, said she would barely make her family's resources sustain their living.

Two years ago, she said, she could already include milk and coffee in her daily P100 budget for provisions.

A check in the public market showed that the standard price of a sack of galunggong is P70 per kilo while a kilo of ordinary milled rice is sold at P25, even if this city hosts part of North Cotabato, a rice growing province.

Carmen Bodoy, a retail store owner, said she reduced buying prices of the goods she sells to maintain her business.

"It's really hard these days. Everybody's complaining," she said.

Rosa Dech, fruitlet said she could easily earn P6,000 per day but this year, she considered herself lucky if she made P4,000 per day.

Trisicle driver Art Bell said he earned at least P500 per day but the amount shrank to P100 due to fuel and other expenses.

Flora Galvanday, consumer welfare manager of the provincial office of the Department of Trade and Industry, blamed the increase in prices of commodities on several fuel price increases.

Galvanday said consumers could make ends meet by becoming wise shoppers.

Consumers should start bound shifting if the brands they were used to become expensive, she said.

"There are sardines that can be bought at P9.50 or P7. Why settle for P19 worth of sardines?" she said. Jeffrey H. Tupas, PDI Mindanao Bureau

ROUNDUP

Laguna priests in congress

SAN PABLO CITY—More than a hundred priests belonging to the Diocese of San Pablo, Laguna are expected to join the thousands of priests who will attend the National Congress of the Clergy (NCC) on July 12 to 16 at the World Trade Center in Pasay City, it was a the historic of the Philippine Church, the congress would serve as the priests' annual retreat by the year. The 2003 Catholic Directory of the Philippines showed that Laguna has 110 diocesan priests and 67 religious priests serving the entire province. Thousands of priests from at least by archdioceses, dioceses, prelatures and apostolic vicariates across the list to attend the congress.

Rosalie O. Flavio, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Soldier killed in ambush

LUCENA CITY— Armed 40 suspected New People's Army rebels ambushed government troops in Barangay Hinulugan, Mulanay town, some 71 km southeast of here, killing a soldier and seriously wounding three Army officers. Maj. Jose Reyes, commander of the Civil Civil Relations Group for Southern Luzon, identified the casualty as Cpl. Pfc. Alcaro. The wounded were identified only as Lt. Manio and Sgt. Acosta. He said the NPA could an improvised landmine in the ambush. The Mulanay police station reported that a certain Dgt. Pedro Arbogast was also wounded during the encounter. The rebels recovered one M-16 rifle, seven bandolier, a backpack with communication documents and three bolomen. *Emile J. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

No casualty in clash

CEBU CITY— The military and suspected members of the New People's Army clashed some in Medellin on June 19 but authorities said there were no casualty from both camps after the 30 minute encounter that started at 9:30 a.m. in the village of Tabagak, Barangay Nangka, Medellin. Lt. Col. Danilo Servañez, Medellin police director, said the Army personnel belonging to the 14th Infantry Battalion based in Barangay Poblacion were conducting security and enlightenment mission recently. The last clash between rebels and soldiers in Medellin was in March in a remote village of Medellin that left a soldier and a rebel dead. *Jhunnex Napallacan, PDI Visayas Bureau*

Casario Torres; 76

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Floods hit Dumaguete, 2 towns; 1 missing

DUMAGUETE CITY— Our private cars declared missing while 25 houses were washed out on Sunday when floods hit this city and two southern towns due to heavy downpour brought about by Typhoon "Helen."

Rescue volunteers scoured the shorelines of the city and the Banica River, searching for Alberto Lacre, 57, who had been missing since Saturday.

Reports said Lacre was on board his mini-cargo truck which was stranded along the spillway of the Banica River that swelled. Barangays Tubtubin and Bagacay.

The strong currents, however, swept the vehicle, Jerry Agustin Dionisio said he tried as he was able to get out of the truck and held on to a branch of a guava tree along the riverbank.

According to reports from the Provincial Social Welfare and Development Office, 27 families were rendered homeless after floods swept 22 houses in Barangay Cantwa and Daniel Fernando, five Candau towns, about 60 km east of here.

Flood also destroyed three houses in Barangay 7, Sharon town, some 50 km south of here.

A total of 315 families suffered losses and damages as were displaced by the flash floods in Barangay San Francisco, Dolores, Hagbangan, San Ramon, Poblacion, Dauin, Hagnaya and Cawitan, Sta. Catalina and Barangay 3 in Siaton.

The provincial government declared two, outdoors and nearby families who were temporarily housed in barangay halls and public schools. *Romy G. Amarado, PDI Visayas Bureau*

Order out to proclaim new mayor

By Carla P. Gomez
PDI Pangasinan Bureau

BAGUIO CITY— The Commission on Elections on June has directed the Board of Canvassers in Mina City, Negros Occidental to immediately proclaim the city's winning mayoral candidate.

The order was issued after the poll body denied the motion filed by the camp of Jose Maravillosa, the losing candidate in the May 10 election, seeking a declaration of the May 10 election of the Comelec first division, which ordered his proclamation proper.

Mina City is the only area in Negros Occidental where no winning mayor has been proclaimed more than a month after the May 10 elections.

Resurrection Ines, Comelec commissioner in charge of Western Visayas, ordered Comelec regional director Norma Undome to coordinate with poll provincial supervisor Marcha Cordero to implementing the en banc resolution promulgated June 17.

"The resolution is considered very clear," Ines said.

The provincial board commended the DENR officials in the province for the seizure of illegally cut logs, numbering 1,052 pieces, of assorted dipterocarps, measuring 331 cubic meters and worth at least P2 million. Emilio F. Abellanosa Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

DISGUISED AS SOLDIERS

NPAs raid Davao police station

DAVAO CITY—A policeman was killed while another was wounded when New People's Army (NPA) rebels disguised as Army soldiers raided the police station in New Corella, Davao del Norte, on Sunday night.

The attack came a day after another NPA group swooped down on a police station in Bayugan, Agusan del Sur, killing a policeman.

The rebels suffered three fatalities.

Lt. Col. Felicisimo Balbuyan, spokesperson of the 4th Infantry Division, identified the policeman killed in New Corella as SPO4 Jaime Geraro and the wounded as SPO1 Sunfo Al-monzor.

Balbuyan, in a radio interview, said the rebels, belonging to the NPAs Front Committee 31, took 24 high-powered firearms, which included Garands, M-16 and M-14 rifles, and more than 2,000 rounds of ammunition.

The policemen, he said, were caught by surprise by the arrival of some 20 rebels, who were camouflage uniforms and identified themselves as members of the Task Force Davao. The rebels were SF-Davao badges.

The attackers were aboard three vans with red license plates.

Authorities manning checkpoints failed to block the vans before the attack as these bore SF-Davao signs.

Two of the vehicles—a white Nissan with license plate No. UDV-322 and a green Kia Besta with license plate No. HCE-605—have been recovered.

Col. Emelinito Pangilinan, Task Force Davao commander, said his unit was not in any way behind the attack.

In separate del Sur, leaders of the NPA's Pulang Diwata Command said they sevaled the charges of violation of the Comprehensive Agreements on the Respect of Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law for the killing of a rebel leader, Ka Gerd Manggolot.

Manggolot was killed in the rebel attack on a police station in Bayugan.

Nieta Medaya, Sectoral Democratic Front spokesperson for the northeastern Mindanao region, said Manggolot was able to raid his comrades to say he was wounded in the arm and hands while withdrawing after the attack.

But when Manggolot's body was found by his relatives in a morgue in Bayugan, it had a bullet wound in the head.

Senior Supt. Ramon Espinito, Agusan del Sur police chief, said police were not bothered by the NPA plan to file charges.

"They were the ones who attacked, and now they are the ones to make complaints (sic)," Espinito said. Anthony S. Alburo and Ma. Kristina E. Cassion, PhilMindanao Bureau

MOUNTAIN OF GOLD

The search for gold and fortune brought these miners to a new gold rush site aptly called Mt. Do-Ro (mountain of gold) in Compostela Valley province. These miners expose themselves to mercury in the hope of finding gold.

Delay in bond payment stalls Pampanga vote recount

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—Losing mayoral candidate Dominador Bituin has sought the recount of votes in this, this, Pampanga, and the organizational court has granted his petition.

But Bituin delayed the recount after he failed to pay the P52,000 fixed on Friday, the deadline set by Judge Carmelita Gutierrez Peralta.

Bituin posted the money on Saturday and until last hand before noon that day.

Filomena Ballesta Jr., municipal election officer, and incumbent Mayor Francisco Guiol, confirmed the delay but Bituin caused.

But Bituin also blamed Guiol, a member of the Liberal Party in Pampanga, for the delay.

This was the first electoral protest in this, Ann. Bituin said Cardib questioned only he had to provide a car to accompany the transfer of 75 ballot boxes from the villages where the illegal electoral fraud took place. Ten, this boy 120-ballot boxes.

In the three contested seats, the town's results of canvass showed that Guiol obtained a margin of 745 votes over Dizon. Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Bureau

Filipino killed in Saudi blast buried in hometown

TUGUEGARAO CITY—The Iranian cook who was killed by terrorists in a hotel in Saudi Arabia this month was buried in his hometown of Piat on Friday.

"Another Filipino resident Sayani Jhoro is going on his final resting place and for sure with his remains. This is the irony of poverty and the desire to have a better life overseas among Cagayanons," Rep. Rhoda Sarenas said in his homily during the last rites for Rolando Cubaog at the Basilica Minore of the Our Lady of Piat.

Cubaog, 27, was killed on May 29 when suspected al-Qaida terrorists attacked the Oasis Tower Hotel in Al-Khobar where he was working.

Two other Filipinos were killed in that attack.

Before he left for Saudi Arabia, Cubaog worked as a helper at the St. Peter's Cathedral here under Sarenas before he could ready.

He finished a two-year course in electrical technology at the Cagayan State University. He went to Manila to work on he would send his two brothers, Melecio and Benjamin, to school.

Piat Mayor Leonel Guzman, local leaders and officials of the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration led by regional director Robert Ibanez, attended Cubaog's burial.

Director Ibanez said the agency would give Cubaog's family cash and educational assistance.

"I hope they would use part of it to finish the dream house that Rolando had started but his family," he said.

"He was a very good son who was concerned about the welfare of his family," Cubaog's mother Remedios earlier told the inquirer.

"He lived in an overseas Chinese hands of copper, enamel and bamboo panels. So he went abroad to help improve our life." Ruben Cajilo, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

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METRO
Lito Alejandro S. Llorente

DI found dead in QC condo

By Tina Santos

A DOCTOR instructor was found dead in his Quezon City home on Sunday, which police said could be linked to a series of homosexual killings in three Manila since last year.

Central Police District Office Criminal Investigation Unit chief, Supt. Peregrino Ugtuan said Universidad Interior 2c, 56, a freelance dance instructor, was strangled to death by three suspected male prostitutes inside his condominium unit at 11 Building 5, Barangay Ugong Pig-asa.

Ugtuan said the male victim of crimes involving homosexuals in Metro Manila, police said.

Last month, entertainment writer and publicist Ali Sotto was brutally murdered inside his home in Columbitos Villas, New Manila.

Fortunato's alleged killer, Ariel Silva, is currently detained at the National Bureau of Investigation.

Salimoren's half-naked body was found on his bed by his roommate, Dante Sagrado, around 11:30 a.m. The victim apparently had been strangled.

Sagrado told police that Salimoren went home around 3:30 a.m. with three "good-looking" young men in love.

He added that he heard one of the suspects arguing with Salimoren over money.

Malabon standoff ends, but…

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

AFTER exactly a week of waiting, Malabon City employees caught in between a running dispute between its "new mayors" finally received their salaries.

But the standoff that had kept their constituents in suspense continues to be a prickly issue, and convincing Mayor Amado Tolentino appears to have not given up the fight.

While a Department of Interior and Local Government statement saying he should retain his status as acting Mayor, Mark Allan "Jayjay" Tambao signed vouchers for the salaries of city hall employees yesterday.

The caisson was stalled because only one signature and the bank where the funds are deposited did not know whose signature to honor for the vouchers.

Valencia told the bayanes that he had taken a two-day vacation leave starting yesterday.

"Dun na ang nagbigay ang gusto ko, nadispose na ng acord-do ang mga tao (I just wanted the employees to get their salaries. That is why I gave way)," he said.

But he added that he would question the DILG statement when he returns tomorrow, a non-holiday, and Mayor Celerino Oreta (also) vows.

Tambao, however, said Valencia could not go on leave because "the DILG said he was still suspended."

Malabon had questioned Interior and Secretary Ronaldo Puno's statement saying Tambao should continue, adding that the DILG and officials at the Office of the President had been biased against him.

He added that he would file charges against Bonaldo as soon as he report is back to work.

'Issue over'

But for Tambao, the issue is over.

In October 2003, the Office of the President suspended Valencia for 12 months, citing "abuse of authority."

Acting on Valencia's petition for review, the Court of Appeals affirmed only a three-month suspension, but set aside the remaining nine months.

Valencia said this was enough basis for him to come back and finish his third term, but Tambao said the court decision was not final and executory.

On Friday, the DILG said in a statement it had no jurisdiction over the controversy adding that such cases involving Metro Manila mayors were under the jurisdiction of the Office of the President.

In the meantime, the DILG said Tambao should step out.

IN THE NAME OF FRIENDSHIP
Hundreds of Filipino-Chinese children ply their hand at painting murals on the walls of the Gregorio del Pilar High School in Manila last Sunday in celebration of Filipino-Chinese Friendship Day (RR) MANZO

4 brothers drown

FOUR brothers drowned in a river near a shopping mall in Mandaluyong City last Sunday.

Police identified the victims as Daniel John, 16; Joseph, 7; Daniel, 5; and Ralph, 4, all surnamed Santos, and residents of Ilog Malaya, Phase 2, Barangay San Bartolo.

Police said Sgt. Gordon Bautista found Ralph's body floating on the river beside 104 Super Green around 3:30 p.m.

As rescuers retrieved Ralph, the boys' grandmother said her other grandsons were also missing. The rescuers' bodies were later found at the bottom of the river, police said.

The victims were declared dead upon arrival at the city hospital. Margarita Gavilan

Osang fights back…

(Turn to page A14)

refused to bar were in defense of her house, and that she only responded to the insults and libelous remarks hurled by Bebs.

'In good faith'

She maintained expressing dissatisfaction with Bebs's initial surgical operations in 1997 were aimed in "good faith, without malice or an ulterior motive," and with good intentions arising from my moral, social and/or civic duty as a public figure," she said.

She added that she only urged the treating public and colleagues in the same profession to seek the "immediate help of competent doctors only."

Two counts of libel were filed by Bebs against the actress for alleged defamatory statements mentioned in two episodes of ABS-CBN's "The Buzz."

Bautista, however, said she never appeared in the April 11, 2004 episode of "The Buzz" and only made humorless comments and reactions to Bebs's interview in the show's April 25, 2004 episode.

"I sincerely believe that the instant charges filed against me were precipitated by my recent personal decision to engage the professional service of another medical practitioner for cosmetic liposuction surgery," she added.

Center for street children gets renovation grant from Japan

THE CHILDREN of Bahay Maria Children Center in Malate will get a newly renovated home, thanks to a grant from Japan.

A P4.9-million project will be funded through the Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Projects (GGP) under Japan's Official Development Assistance (ODA).

Japanese Ambassador to the Philippines Kojiro Tekawa and Bahay Maria president and former Ambassador Howard Dee signed the contract for the renovation project.

The center, which has deteriorated with age, had been accommodating about 40 children through the residence was originally intended for a family of six.

After the project's completion, the center will be able to accommodate 90 children at a time.

Excited

Lyn Salgado, 17, who has been with Bahay Maria for 10 years, said she is excited. The renovation would mean she no longer has to stay with 10 girls in a room sharing an electric fan.

While the renovation is ongoing, the children will be temporarily housed by lessees-chair Maria Primo. The project is expected to be finished by December this year.

JAPANESE Ambassador Kojiro Tekawa (center) during the signing rites for the Bahay ni Maria grant witnessed by Barangay Bel-Air chairperson Mona Lichauco, Bishop Pedrito Escalon, Makati Rep. and Mrs. Teddy Locsin, Ambassador and Mrs. Howard Dee, Japanese chair Mariel Primo, and Makati Councilor Jaqui Binay.

Ambassador Tekawa expressed confidence that the project will be completed early so that the children will have bigger rooms where they could learn and play.

During the signing ceremony, the children introduced themselves, sang a few songs, and shared what they liked most about Bahay Maria. Mr. Tekawa later told the children he was delighted to meet all of them.

Bahay Maria has been helping poor and abused children meet their basic needs such as food, shelter, medicines and education at supposedly since 1990.

Japan's GGP was launched in 2003 to endure poverty and eradicate the disparate distribution of wealth through grassroots projects.

About 300 projects ranging from P1 to P4 million have been implemented by partners and stakeholders. Elmer Ramos

2nd suspect in priest slay surrenders

A SUSPECT in the June 11 killing of a priest in Tondo, Metro Manila, is now in the custody of the Quezon City police.

Ronaldo Francisco, 20, gave up through the intervention of Reynaldo Lopez, barangay captain of Sto. Niño in Cubao.

The Central Luzon police turned him over to the Northern Police District yesterday.

Francisco, also known as Gaal, is one of two suspects in the killing of Fr. Ramon Bernardo Asuncion, 47, assistant parish priest of Holy Redeemer Iloilo and Gregorian Martyrs Parish at Kamikazi Village in Navotas.

Chief Supt. Edal Queral, Central Luzon police director, said Senior Insp. Rodolfo Dimabuyo of the Quezon City Intelligence Division had traced his whereabouts in Batasan.

The other suspect, Roger Medinas, was arrested earlier in Silang, Cavite.

Asuncion was on his way back to Navotas from Calbayog City on his bicycle on the night of June 12 when two men stopped him along a bridge on C-2 Road and declared a holdup. Tonette Orejas, Phil Journal Latest Desk

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Tuesday, June 22, 2004
16th Week in Ordinary Time
1st Reading: 2 KI 19:9-11, 14-21, 31-35, 36
Gospel: Mt 7:6, 12-14

Jesus said to his disciples, "Do not give what is holy to the dogs, or throw your pearls to the pigs; they might trample on them and even turn on you and tear you to pieces.

"So, do to others whatever you would that others do to you; there you have the Law and the Prophets.

"Enter through the narrow gate, for wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many go that way. How narrow is the gate and cramped is the road that leads to life, and few find it.

Commentary:

"Do to others whatever you would that others do to you." This rule is considered a summary of the Christian's duty to others. It seems to be negative form ("Do not do to others what you would not like done to yourselves") as also 2nd century document, the Didache and the Apology of Aristides. Scholars believe it may have formed part of an early catechism. It readily fits contained in Deuteronomy, "You shall love the stranger for you were strangers in the land of Egypt" (10:19). It is not, however, peculiar to Christianity. Its negative form is to be found in Hillel (c.15, in the writings of the two great Jewish scholars (Hillel (1st century BC) and Philo of Alexandria (1st century BC and AD), and in the Analects of Confucius (5th and 6th centuries BC). It also appears in one form or another in the writings of Plato, Aristotle, and Seneca—all but the last of whom predate Jesus, hence not his contemporaries.

But I often wonder if this "golden rule" should be considered the goal of Christian perfection. It makes the self the measure, and therefore cannot carry very far. Jesus said "Love one another as I have loved you" (Jn 13:13). There is a wide world of difference between the way Jesus loved and the way that you would wish others to love you.

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Sexual harassment in the workplace

FOR PROFESSIONING a female subordinate, a supervisor at the now-no Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. (Pagcor), has been demoted in rank and may be suspended for several months.

The supervisor (a married) does the female subordinate

Upon receiving the complaint from the female employee, Pagcor Chair Ebdane Fernandez immediately had the supervisor investigated.

Ebdane warned the lothario himself out of Pagcor, but he was told that it was too harsh a punishment. So, the guy was demoted and his pay slashed. The end of his career is still in sense. He still be reassigned to another branch. He also faces seven months' suspension.

"I don't like my people behaving in our backyard," said Ebdane.

The beleaguered guy now says what he did. It all started when there was a party at the office. One of the casino managers celebrated his birthday. Beer flowed.

The supervisor, already drunk, returned in his post. He poured out his pent-up feelings to his female subordinate.

The unsuspecting guy says he also did struggling to keep (Please stop. Respect me because I respect you)," said the subordinate.

But the lothario persisted. He said he was "obsessed" with her. He insisted on taking her home. The subordinate left the office in a hurry.

The following day she filed a charge of sexual harassment against the supervisor with the Pagcor human resources division.

Sky that story serve as a lesson to executives who pull their rank on female subordinates to gain sexual favors.

Sexual harassment is governed by Republic Act 7877, otherwise known as the Anti-Sexual Harassment Act of 1995. It applies to employers, employees, managers, agents of employers, teachers, instructors, professors, coaches, and any person who has authority, influence or moral ascendancy over another in a work or training or education environment, when the sexual harassment is committed:

1. Against one who is under the care, custody or supervision of the offender;
2. Against one whose education, training, apprenticeship or tutorship is entrusted to the offender;
3. When the sexual favor is made a condition to the hiring or the grant of training opportunities or favorable compensation or the continued employment of the victim, or the granting of favorable compensation, promotion or privileges, or the deferment or waiver of any disciplinary action or similar measure, or the favorable consideration of the victim's employment or any other benefit, privilege or consideration; or
4. When the sexual advances result in an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment for the employee, student, trainee or apprentice.

Any person who violates the provisions of the law is liable for a fine of not less than P10,000 nor more than P20,000, or imprisonment for not less than one month nor more than six months, or both such fine and imprisonment at the discretion of the court.

Sexual harassment is not about lust, it's about power. Men who sexually harass their office subordinates are not doing it for romance. They do it because they want complete control over their female subordinates.

* * *

Two years ago, some office secretaries at a big TV network came to me at "homebuyer.ph/ay/talk" to complain about the sexual harassment by certain executives of the TV network.

They also exposed the practice of a top executive of this network for soliciting sexual favors from young talents in exchange for "breaks" for the talents.

And to think that this network has a program that safeguards the rights of children.

It's a good thing that the top executive is no longer in the network. Otherwise, he would now have to victimize young talents.

ON TARGET
Ramon Tulfo

SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

SUMMARY JUDGMENT PROCEEDINGS—Contention of entry to civil registry—Rule 108 of the Revised Rules of Court provides the procedure for cancellation or correction of entries in the civil registry. The proceedings under said rule may either be summary or adversary in nature. If the correction sought to be made in the civil register is clerical, then the procedure to be adopted is summary. If the rectification affects the civil status, citizenship or nationality of a party, it is deemed substantial, and the procedure to be adopted is adversary. This is true ruling in Republic vs. Valencia (244 SCRA 358, G. R. No. L-59038, March 31, 1995) where we held that even substantial errors in a civil registry may be corrected and the true facts established under Rule 108 provided the parties interested by the same avail themselves of the appropriate adversary proceedings. An appropriate adversary suit or proceeding is one where the trial court has conducted proceedings where all relevant facts have been fully and properly developed, where opposing counsel have been given opportunity to demolish the opposite enemy's case, and where the evidence has been thoroughly weighed and considered. (Lauro Vasco Gonzaga, Fire Division, Republic vs. Lim, G.R. No. 153883, January 23, 2004) BVD, R. Hilos

Osang fights back; sues lipo expert for libel

By Maryan C. Orig

ACTRESS Rosanna Roces yesterday took her morning battle with cosmetic surgeon Dr. Vicki Belo a step further by filing a P25-million libel suit against her "for lack of composure and morals."

"As a result of the vicious slurs and the cruel and degrading remarks caused by the complainant against me and my family, I am hereby filing my own criminal case of libel as defined and punished by Article 353 of the Revised Penal Code against complainant Victoria G. Belo, and for the deep personal anguish suffered by myself and my family," Roces said in her complaint-affidavit.

"I am asking for P25 million without apology," Roces—former wife of Robin in real life—said, adding that two of her children have stopped going to school because they were embarrassed by the publicity.

Roces also said statements as

CONTINUED ON A-3

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GOOSEN Survives last-round shootout with Mickelson.

Farce, drama as Goosen wins US Open

SOUTHAMPTON, New York—A fuming Retief Goosen took his second US Open title in a dramatic last-round shootout with Masters champion Phil Mickelson here on Sunday.

In a gas-retarding mustard shirt, Goosen held his nerve while Mickelson self-destructed on the short par-three 17th to hand the South African the title.

"It was tough. It was actually quite painful since you're out there and playing, and the pressure," admitted Goosen, who won his first US Open in 2001. "If you're trying to do it stick to the game plan and try to stay away from big numbers."

Goosen and Mickelson were the only two players left who refused to buckle under the serious conditions that had transformed Shinnecock Hills into a hell that left some of the world's best golfers shell-shocked.

Mickelson, looking for back-to-back majors, birdied throughout the round but finally went in four when he tackled the par-five 16th.

But Goosen, the third-round leader and playing directly behind him, matched Mickelson and went to the par-three 17th all square.

And it was on the 179-yard 17th that Mickelson's dream was crushed.

The 34-year-old American hit his 6-iron tee shot into the left bunker. He blasted out to the fringe but was too put aside worse than past.

"Even when the heartbreak as his bogey putt dipped by backlocks, a stunned Mickelson was walking in the 18th tee when back.

CONTINUED ON A20

Players slam 'Shinnecock Hell' set-up

MICKELSON

SOUTHAMPTON, New York—The US Golf Association (USGA) came in for a scathing attack over the conditions of Shinnecock Hills, the site of the 104th US Open, as some of the world best players were left frustrated and humiliated here on Sunday.

Retief Goosen, 2 Open champion the day by two-shots back of eventual winner Phil

PLAYERS | A 20

WHAT'S INSIDE

Serena eyes 3rd Wimby title /A19
Foreign teams out of PBA wars /A18
Rosales bags P1.1M /A19

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Foreign fives out of PBA regular wars

By Jane Navarro

FOREIGN teams will no longer play in the regular wars of the Philippine Basketball Association. Instead, they will be invited to play in a mini-tournament, which the league has vowed to hold before the start of each season.

PBA Commissioner Noli Eala confirmed the league agreed Monday to the proposal to limit the league's foreign participation in the form of a pre-season tournament," said Eala.

The 2004-2004 season officially starts in September with two conference titles up for grabs—the all-Filipino and invitational conferences. The season ends in June.

The pro league is also considering plans to forge a pact with Australian and Korean basketball leagues that would pave the way for teams from the two countries to participate in a small PBA tournament each season.

Eala said he is in constant touch with his counterpart in the Australian National Basketball League, and both have been thinking of ways to make the proposed mini-tournament which will involve teams from the two countries, which will feature only two foreign teams."

Many of the fives were invited regularly in a PBA tournament since last year mainly to raise a game against local squads.

The US Five-man selection came close to bombing Gat Jim but Jim Rigsel flew escapes with a 100-104 win Sunday night.

"It just happened that we couldn't find a really competitive foreign team that could match the PBA teams' level of play. We'll try to find better teams and scout them ahead of time," said Eala.

EALA

LONG: The tease behind San Miguel's two defeats, says Uichico. MANILA STANDARD

SMB on Long: Never again!

If an opportunity to bring back Ali Long arises, the San Miguel Beer team will not hesitate to jump it.

San Miguel Beer coach Jong Uichico promised and shed tears Ali Long's unfortunate performances was the reason behind the franchise's bash to bash down in the quarterfinals.

"The tease game their initial choice of the pair but Ali missed in his second dozen opening three during those twelve seconds," said Uichico. "You must understand that the success of a team team largest optimal conference depends highly on the imports."

Uichico did not make any specific reference to Long's misfortune last season.

The former coach boasted out of the quarterfinals after losing to Red Bull Barbican and the Talk 'N Text/Purefoods Power Pistons despite a runaway 16-2 elimination.

FOOD FOUND

Asked if Long, who is said to be relocated to the Philippines, may use Uichico's answer was blunt: "No." Jane Navarro

Farce, drama as Goosen wins US Open

From page A1

"I don't know what happened on 17. It was just a hard shot out of the fairway," said Michelson. "I hit an easy putt, but it just because I knew it was quick. But I still shouldn't have gone six, seven feet past."

All the while, Goosen was standing on the 17th tee watching the drama from afar unfold.

"I don't exactly what was going on in there. I know I was going to have to hang in there, that he's the guy to beat," said the 35-year-old.

The South African pulled his tee shot into the right bunker at Bethlehem but splashed out to three feet and made no mistake with his putt.

Only a rush of blood to the head could rob Geaute of his second US Open title and it never looked like coming as he drilled his drive down the 18th, 9 9-iron to 20 feet from the pin left him three putts for victory. He only needed two.

When it comes, who began the day with a two-shot cushion, and Michelson coached the fare, challengers Ernie Els, Brad Faxis, Rocco Mediate, Tim Clark, Jeff Maggert and Mike Weir had all rolled over the punishing three-rounds Bethlehem.

Stricker's opening passage of 71-71 strokes was the most weighted at a US Open since Walt Zehr II, recorded only by the 1972 Open at Pebble Beach.

He started the day three-under and eyeing a map of 36 Open greats.

Which he realized off the seventh proving had fallen to zero over for the championship. A double bogey on the eighth and his victory chances all but died. He finished with a total matching 36-over 88 for the day and tied for ninth, seven, over for the championship.

Faxis saw his chances dropping from two under to three over after Maggert shot three by the time he reached the turn, Mediate four and Maggert only one but four back from Goosen.

Tiger Woods' Saturday dreams that he was ready to with a chance despite starting nine-shots back were quickly dashed as he matched the turn in four over par 39.

Maggert finished third for the tournament after carding a final round two-over 72.

An idea of what was in store came early in the morning when the championship was shrunk to a mere 54 holes after the tournament par three second hosted a three-ring spectacle.

Kevin Stadler was the first to play the hole on Sunday and he could only look in horror as his two-foot putt slid past the hole, kept rolling, and finally vanished off the green.

The bonus were reduced to and play was delayed for 28 minutes as water was poured onto the putting surface. AFP

PERONA

Perona may miss Grand Prix

BASEER Perona, the NL Americans sprinter who is vying to compete in next year's Southeast Asian Games, is a doubtful starter for the Asian Grand Prix set July 1 in Manila.

Holding back the 6-foot-1, 20-year-old Oriente are conflicts in the working schedule back to Long Beach, California.

The Philippine Amateur Track and Field Association yesterday said Perona has yet to confirm his participation in the Asian meet.

"He (Ed) is supposed to run for the 80 meets in the first two legs of the Grand Prix in Bangkok tomorrow and in Colombo on June 26.

"But we are willing to give him some concessions because we understand that he has a job back in the US," said Ricky president Go.

Jong Kok of Oriente, who works for AT&T in Long Beach.

Go said Perona will run in the 200 meters dash and the 400m.

The Grand Prix gathers Asia's top five athletes in each of the 13 events. Long jumpers Lorena Nelson Andre and Nicole Ong of Guam are already in Thailand to jumpstart the country's campaign in the meet. *Mara Anthony Reyes*

Continent's top karters vying in Asian meet

MALAYSIAN karting wonder Calvin Wong Weng men leads a star of over 100 Asian karters arriving today to compete in the 2004 Cosmo Filipino-Shell Asian Karting Open Championship on June 24-27 at the Carmona Circuit Philippines in Cavite.

Indonesia, the Philippines' neighbor raised for the 4th last year, is again fielding its star karters.

The Indonesians are rated highly with 12 of its best karters in the 2004 Asian Zone Karting Championships expected at the meeting line.

Karters are also expected from Singapore, Thailand, India and Hong Kong.

The Philippines' brightest hopes include Marcos Gutierrez of Cebu Racing Group and Mark Bautgarver of Rizal Karting, be the Junior Honda automotive division, defending champ Michelle Bautgarver, Kevin Brown, Rizal-Kilau-Mendoza karters Mikee Guadagni, Andy Villalon and Allan Uy for the Formula 300 Open class and Alexandra Madrigal and Brandon Angel for the Cadet 85 class.

The four day event is sanctioned by the Automobile Association of the Philippines and sponsored by Filipino Shell Petroleum Corp., Bridgestone, Genac, PCSO, Pagcor Sports, Philippine Sports Commission, Palmer Asia, Stellar Manila and Arlen Enterprises.

Top cagers' exodus a worry for NCAA

By Jasmine W. Payo

TOP NCAA officials are worried about the continual exodus of some of the league's finest basketball talents to the more popular UAAP.

At the press launch of the 80th National Collegiate Athletic Association yesterday at the ABS-CBN Eugenio Lopez Jr. building in Quezon City, the officials lamented that league stars "always at the beginning of every year."

"We definitely want to keep them in our team. But it's the choice of the players and their parents," said Fr. Noel de Vera, San Beda's league representative.

Among the players who graduated from the NCAA's last high school players, but played junior recruits in the past years, including Magnum Membrere, LA Tenorio, Pat Fermeto and local recruits Antares, JV Casio to La Salle, and Jay Eligan, Jun Almeida and Joel Pontejos to the University of the Philippines.

But Dr. Vera noted that the school is now doing its best in retaining top athletes to continue playing for the mythical squad. "There's now a program in place. Hopefully, our best players will stay," he said.

Lonie Mas, coach of the defending champion Letran Knights, also qualified rumors that he's planning to leave the team despite several offers from the Mall Tuborculosis in the PBA.

Dr. Ramon Cesado, SVP of host school University of Perpetual Help, said talk that other colleges will be attracted into the league was premature.

The NCAA opens its 80th season with four senior basketball games on Saturday at the Araneta Coliseum. Jose Rizal University Heavy Bombers face former city of Perpetual Help Altas at 2 p.m., the San Sebastian Stags tackle the San Beda Red Lions at 4 p.m., the Mapua Cardinals meet the St. Benilde Blazers at 6 p.m. and the Philippine Christian University Dolphins clash with the Knights in the nightcap at 7:30 p.m.

NCAA Commissioner Ricky Palou (fifth from left) with coaches (from left) Horacio Lim of Mapua, Lonnie Tolentino of PCU, Tom Valenzona of UE, Louie Alas of Letran, (far right) Chief of UPHSD, Tonichi Yturri of JRU, Benildo and Jude Roque, representing San Beda, at yesterday's launch of the basketball tournament. ALVIN SOLIVEN

Players slam . . .

From page A1

Goosen. But as he struggled with the heartbreak genius, the two-time former champion went into doldrums. He had watched on Saturday night that the season was getting out of control.

"I was playing very well," he remembered. The majority of the field is going to make four three rounds to challenge," he hinted.

He was also wrong about the hole. The line going through untried ones, the second group a on and other.

Tiger made his date angered by the course set up and hit out at the USGA.

"I spoke to him today," he said. "That's the last time I would get. The course got out of control.

"There is nothing saving with a course being tough, as long as it's fair."

Phil Mickelson was unhappy about the set up. "I played some of the best golf of my life and I still couldn't shoot par," said the Masters champion who carded a one-over 71.

A host of players also used some of the final round. Charles Howell carded an 80, Tom Kite 84, Alex Cejka 81, Craig Parry 81, Phillip Price 84 and Billy Mayfair an 85. AFP

Goosen gobbles it all up

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

OBS scored out the gallant winners. Another smiled away his debut. the month at contender United in win it homed out in a blues of scandal shots.

The 104th US Open that ended scoreless day in Homestead Hills in Long Island, New York, will go down in history as an set another one that got away for Phil Mickelson, who would finish second one-to-the-and's second major.

Mickelson, the Masters winner in April, was, until, one of the hottest golfers the first US Open of the US Open. On the 71st, as par 3, he chose to hit his bunker shot to shot. Although he blasted to within maybe 6 feet, his downhill putt soared left when it was just an ant's hanger away from the hole. Sadly shaken, Mickelson missed the 3-footer coming back. Double bogey. That pushed him two shots off with a look left behind Retief Goosen, who would proceed to wet his stomach for open title in four years with a routine par on 18 that Mickelson could not tackle.

Goosen shot 1-over par 71 for a 9-under total, Mickelson 71 for 2-under.

Only a hole ago—at 15—Mickelson made birdie from 75 feet after an approach from the rough. That gave him a 1-shot lead over Goosen with two holes to go with a minus-4 total for the tournament.

Oh, you want more blues by Steve?

Only two holes ago—at 15—Mickelson also gathered birdie from 45 feet to earn a share of the lead.

That was from a par who trailed Goosen by 3 shots going in to the 13th after Mickelson missed a short par putt on the 12th.

At 13, the minus 4 Goosen appeared set to face some ground when he went from barren rough to forearm rough after an errant drive. But after finding green 197 yards away, he stared par from 3 feet to keep his 3-shot lead over Mickelson.

A flight ahead of Goosen, Mickelson went minus 2 and 2 strokes behind Goosen after 14. Although Mickelson missed a 12 foot birdie putt here, Goosen would save deep sand on the same hole. He was apart from a "fried-egg" lie to contend well, after barely blasting out—Goosen's awkward saucer made her appear like a dog making a pee as his left foot was resting atop thick grass on the elevated ridge of the bunker—his pitch shot came 10-feet past the cup, before.

The 35th seemed to indicate Goosen was destined to win it.

Finding the same left bunker that Mickelson saw on 17, Goosen blasted to within maybe 2 feet for a virtual tap-in—his 5th out-par in a row.

Only a mistake of major proportions would now deprive Goosen, as cool as the Antarctic ice in February and as calm as the Mindanao deep in summer, of victory as he had the history in store: 4 up over with a last-hole bogey, which he avoided by two-putting for par from the fringe.

Mickelson, 34, would finish second in the US Open for the third time.

But if there's one trait brightly shining in Mickelson's shellshot days, it's his new attitude in dealing with defeat: smiling it away. And Phil should find consolation in the fact that even the best aren't supposed anymore to be winning them all. One is the majors especially.

Look at Tiger Woods. He used to almost win all the time... eight majors racked up. But he left, including three Masters. But in the US Open, Woods barely makes par out. Baseball plus 10 for the season, 14 for 15 somersaults, flashing a big smile after a birdie on 14—his only birdie for the day.

And little life!

Mickelson! "Hit Big Easy" He, Goosen's fellow South African, fired previously in Woods' No. 1 would nothing, par two down behind Goosen like blinked on the start of the day committed so many mistakes yesterday. Quick feel he would have made like after drawing 80 for a plus-7 total—he could followed with five double bogeys.

Didn't say golf is a game of mistakes?

BAUBAUAN, Here's a score happy birthday greetings today to my pretty, lovely, loves Mrs. Rhonda, the handsome provincial Calbayog. Goosen. I was supposed to kill a lonely with him two days before the May 10 elections but the call of duty was Parong Jones/Sito parking in Lucena City as a member of the provincial board of canvassers. Happy birthday according to Elsa, the reason, the remaining provincial fact fulfilled "without loss of favor." Here's a glass to those who will champion truth and honesty in these times of "noise and mayhem." Speaking of birthdays, of celebrating a new lease on life are other dear friends of mine—Lutie L. Tolentino and Louis S. Veneto (June 23) and Joseph A. Estrada (June 19), yes, Noah's birthday!). Happy birthday!

Rosales bags ₱2.1M; Kerr tops ShopRite

ROCHESTER Rosales kept the cash register ringing as she earned $40,527 (about P2.1 million) for a strong sixth place finish Sunday in the ShopRite LPGA Classic at the Locust Hill Country Club here.

Rosales used a late charge of three birdies on her last six holes to shoot a three-under-par 68 that got her into a five-player logjam at 205, three behind eventual winner Cristie Kerr of the United States.

Kerr, who pulled off her third LPGA victory of the season, also closed out with a 68.

Rosales, who won her first professional title in the Thrift-Fit A century last May raised her total winnings for the season to a career record $394,637, surpassing her $368,598 earnings in 2003.

She also kept a four-grip of eighth spot in the money list going into next week's Women's Kemper at New York which ushers in the year's biggest event, the $3.1 million US Open in South Shelley Manor, Indianola.

After being hobbled for an early start in, any that forced her to withdraw from the Wichita Pep's Championship, Rosales has made the cut in her last 10 tournaments.

Kerr burned as it fast birdie past on the 18th hole to spoil 17 year-old Paula Creamer's bid to become the first amateur to win in the LPGA since Jeanne Cramer in 1969.

With the tournament on the line, Kerr calmly made the putt after playing partner Creamer missed a 10-footer that would have sent them to a playoff hole.

Creamer (69) and Dicide Steigel (71) finished one shot back at 203, followed by Juli Inkster (67) and Michiko Kiss (69) at 204. Rookie, Karrie Webb, Jackie Gallagher-Smith, Aree Song and Yuanna Chico were right behind at 205.

Filipino-American Dorothy Delasin wound up at 206 after a 74. She earned $2,750.

Creamer missed birdie putt after birdie putt. Sunday, including the clincher on the 509-yard 18th hole. Jaiya Arcano

ROSALES: Record earnings

Dableo, Paraguayan bow out

FLEURIOSA Black Paraguayan and Ronald Dableo crashed out in the opening round of the 17th World Chess Championship Sunday night in Tripoli, Libya.

Paraguay needed a 1-1 draw in the regulation and lost 2-4 in rapid play against Super GM Viktor Bologan of Moldova.

After forcing a draw in Game 1, Dableo dropped a 0.5-1.5 decision to Super GM Loek Sloot Simpson of Romania.

The 28-year-old Paraguayan needed just a draw in the lock and of the two-game regulation, but Bologan bounced back after the Filipino, employing the Queen's Indian Defense instead of his pet line King's Indian Defense, resigned in 30 moves.

"Black should have used the King's Indian because he just needs a draw. He should have continued his time also," said engineer Ric Bologan, Mark's father.

In the first playoff game, the World No. 36 Bologan smacked the 64-year-old grandmaster Gerardo of Paraguay seven with black after 37 moves of a Caro-Kann Defense No.3 variation.

In the second game, Bologan, the Victoria knockout semifinalist, needed only 24 moves to cart to his favorite Sicilian Defense Najdorf variation and bounced Dableo out in 45 moves.

Bologan will face Alexander Moiseenko of Ukraine, a 1.5-0.5 winner over Sergey Fedorchuk of Russia, in the next round.

Paraguayan beat Dableo, Anand 5.5a Zonal champion, in their second game after 26 moves of another Caro-Kann.

The Romanian world middle-with Sergei Tivakov of the Netherlands in Round Two. Tivakov won over Gabriel Sargissian of Armenia. IM Michel Bernardino

Britons hope for Tim win

LONDON—Tim Henman has a plan for Wimbledon. Don't think too much, just do what comes natural.

The Briton is a favorite among his peers to become the first homegrown men's champion of the grasscourt grand slam for the year's and known he has all the tools required.

All he must do is relax and do what he does best.

Having become the first British man in 41 years to reach the semifinals of the French Open last month, the weight of expectation on Henman is almost palpable. The players, though, taken it in their stride.

"It's always been the shadow highlight of any years of my tennis career playing at home. Wimbledon has always been my favorite tournament," he said.

"If I was to come into the time of year not enjoying the spotlight and the attention that goes with it then that would absolutely affect my performance but I've always thrived on it."

A major breakthrough has been the mental side of Henman's game. Once frail, he now has the demeanor of a seasoned battler.

Reuters

WILLIAMS: There's room for improvement

Serena eyes 3rd Wimbledon title

WIMBLEDON, England—Serena Williams says she would win more if she were less of a perfectionist.

Despite losing just three matches so far, Williams seems there's room for improvement, especially since it's been a year since she won a Grand Slam title. Ranked 20th but seeded No. 1, she'll begin a bid for her third consecutive Wimbledon championship Tuesday.

"I'm really hard on myself," she said. "I just want to do it perfect every time. My dad is constantly telling me that 'Serena, you've got to relax.' I think that's the only factor."

In other words, Williams figures the only way she can lose is by self-destructing like she did at the French Open, committing 46 unforced errors in a quarterfinal defeat against Jennifer Capriati.

Barely two weeks later, Williams chuckles discussing what she describes as her "outside influences."

"I think a lot of people expect me to win 100 percent of the time," she said. "And I expect myself to win 200 percent of the time.

"You're not going to win every match, no matter how good you are. So if you think about it that way, then it's really not that bad."

That might sound like some one willing to settle for less than perfect, and critics contend Williams has more than lately because she's outmuscled her opponents in tennis or she could spend more time acting and designing clothes. And she seemed slightly disengaged Sunday when she said she didn't get lesser who she will play in her opening match. (AP)

Portugal booters eliminate Spain

LISBON—The journey took four years and much heartache, but Portugal' striker Nuno Gomes finally achieved sporting redemption on Sunday as he produced the goal which lifted his country into the quarterfinals at Euro 2004.

The Benfica striker's 24-st goal in his 42nd international—giving Portugal a 1-0 victory over Spain—was worth its weight in gold for the host nation, which is still traumatized by its semifinal loss to France in 2000.

Nuno Gomes was not thinking about that in the immediate aftermath of Sunday night's win.

"When I scored I felt deliriously happy. I want to dedicate this win to my daughter, Laura Isabel.

"This win is our reports to all the critics me had after losing to Greece." (Oct 17, year-old said.

Nine years ago, Nuno Gomes was one of several Portuguese stars to protest violently to Austrian referee Guido Brinks and his assistants after Brinks awarded a decisive penalty when Portugal defender Abel Xavier handled a shot from substitute Sylvain Wiltord.

Gomes was sent off for pushing the referee and earned a seven-month international ban from UEFA. AFP

Schumacher secures 8th victory

INDIANAPOLIS—Ferrari's Michael Schumacher savoured to his eighth win in nine races on Sunday in an action-packed US Grand Prix that left younger brother Ralf in hospital.

It was the world champion's 76th career win and he had to fight for it, passing arch-rival Juan Montoya in the pits after the Colombian's BMW engine blew up on lap 63.

Schumacher had started on pole position for the first time this year but again finished a disappointed runner-up, 2.0 seconds behind.

Japan's Takuma Sato took the final podium place for BAR while Colombian Juan Pablo Montoya was disqualified for the second time in a row.

Schumacher had to drive past an ambulance and doctors tending to Ralf in the wrecked chassis in the middle of the track before he got reassurance that his sibling was not seriously hurt. Reuters

SCHUMACHER

Iloilo Warriors turn back Ozamiz Cotta

ILOILO CITY—The Iloilo Warriors dropped a crippling 10-11 run in the third quarter to twice beat Dumaguete City, 98-82, Sunday in the MBC (National Basketball Conference) national championship at the University of San Agustin gym here.

Francis Saro, Eduardo Alfaro and Carlos Bayron Jr. sparked the win over explosive which enabled them to wipe out a 42-54 deficit and square 71-71 lead going into the final canto.

"I just told the boys to be patient," said first to coach Rod Delos. "I'm proud of them because they showed big fighting hearts."

Two breakaways and a steal by Bayron in the closing seconds sealed the Warriors' fourth straight win.

Stacked by the Iloilo Basketball League led by homegrown Robert Uy, the Wearlers regained their 92-80 victory over Mayor Trey-nalds Hawthorne's Cotta two weeks ago.

Saro again led the Warriors with 24 points but Jaiya grabbed the spotlight by posting his second straight double-double with 17 points and 10 rebounds.

OVERALL CHAMPS

Manila Water employees celebrate with company president Tere Aquino (fourth from left, second row) after winning the overall championship of the 2004 Nyala Sportsfest held recently at the Rizal Memorial Stadium. Manila Water dominated the six-team field composed of companies under the Ayala Group by winning 18 of 33 gold medals at stake and scoring a total of 324 points, 44 ahead of Globe Telecom.

Lyceum targets repeat over FEU

By Tina Ibarra

HOOP Lyceum plans to duplicate its first round win over the Eastern University today to keep its semifinals bid alive in the Shakey's V-League women's volleyball tournament at the Ynares Gym.

San Sebastian College-Recoletos faces league-leading University of Santo Tomas in the second game.

UST, La Salle and San Sebastian have secured slots in the Final Four, which will start on Sunday.

Lyceum has a good chance of clinching the last semis ticket, as it defeated FEU in three straight sets, 25-21, 25-20, 25-14, in their

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ENTERTAINMENT

Editor Louie C. Camino

Martial arts saved Ronnie's life twice

By Marinel R. Cruz

FULL OF HOPE. Richards thinks there's still hope for action movies, if only privacy would be curbed and producers would spend money on new materials.

ACTION star Ronnie Richards said his knowledge in martial arts has been helping him not only in his movies but also in keeping himself from danger in real life.

Ronnie said that in one real-life incident, he was accosted in an extortion scam by a local government official in the '90s. In another instance, the actor himself almost died when a drunken man tried to stab him.

"Martial arts teaches you to be prepared physically and mentally to be conscious of your attacker's every move," explained Ronnie, who is an instant local master in his brother, Christopher Ricketts, 29, a self-defense school called Bahlokan, which is also a Filipino slang for brawl.

Ronnie said the first incident happened during an exhibition basketball game. The government official was to do the ceremonial tossing of the ball when a brouhaha hit the area, followed by explosions. A number of people were hurt in the ensuing stampede.

"Luckily, the official wasn't killed," Ronnie told Inquirer Entertainment last Friday. "You should see panic in an extreme like that. You should have presence of mind."

"You should always calmly look for the exit," he added.

He refused to talk about the second incident because he said it was settled right on the day it happened. But he let his guard down in a restaurant in Cebu decade. "It happened during a town fiesta. The man asked me to drink with him in a nearby street party. He wore three boys celebrating his birthday that day."

The man was enraged when Ronnie declined the invitation. "I don't drink, I don't smoke," Ronnie pointed out. "The man left. But he came back. He was holding a knife and he tried to stab me. Smugglers."

Ronnie said he sustained lacerations on the right arm and hand.

"That man must have thought that I was just a typical actor and didn't know martial arts fighting," Ronnie told a group of entertainment writers earlier, over lunch last Thursday. The latter were invitees for his latest movie, "Blame Mama 3: Awats ... The Last Act," where he promises the art of stab fighting as seen.

Ronnie wrote, directed and co-produced the movie with his wife, singer Winnie Ricketts-Richards (Winnie).

"I had to consult a lot of people to make this movie," he said. "I wanted to find out if it was worth doing. Hopefully it would pave the way for more local action movies. We haven't had a locally produced action movie for some months now."

Ronnie said he had starred in more than 50 action movies since he ventured show biz in the early '80s. In 1989, he was co-director of "Target: Maganto," where he was also the lead actor.

He said his frustration over the state of action movies in the Philippines led him to writing and directing. "Negosyante (investigator) ako is because I'm a big admirer of Frank vs. Dragon," he said. "Willie Milan and Leonardo Cuenco said they saw the potential in me, too."

But Ronnie believes there is still hope for action movies, if only privacy would be curbed and producers would be willing to shell out money for bookmaterials. "We have no problem as far as talents are concerned," he said. "It's the materials. They're still the same."

He considers "Blame Mama 3" one of his biggest breaks as a director, writer and actor. "It opened doors for me to be recognized abroad," he said.

The fighters brothers put up a bahlokan in Australia and later in New Jersey in the United States, at a friend's Rey Galang, manages the schools for them.

"I want to be a great role model to the youth," said the actor. "I want to be accepted not only as an action movie actor, but also as a martial artist."

"Blame Mama 3" is an official entry to the 2004 Manila Film Festival, which will begin on June 25. It also stars Lorna Castri, Mandy Ochoa, Bet Cortez, "Tata Bodyguard" host Lydia Garcia, Miss Earth Philippines 2000 Theresa Marie Sulpizio and 13-year-old martial arts expert Bruce Ricketts.

'Queen' Sarah is coming

SPECTACULAR. Brightman's "Harem" show promises to be an breathtaking orchestra.

THE "QUEEN of the classical crossover world" is coming.

Sarah Brightman is expected to arrive in Manila today for her concert, "Harem 2004 Asia Tour," at the CCP in the Pasay City concert complex.

Brightman is coming to Manila from Hanoi where she is attending the World Peace Music Awards. She also came from Kuala Lumpur where she also performed in a concert that is part of her tour of Europe, the Far East and Australia.

"The show that we stage at the Madison Square Garden, in Beijing and in other parts of the world will be the same show that we will bring to Manila," the concert's production manager, Chris Knights, said earlier.

Brightman's concert is anchored on her latest album, "Harem." The production promises to be spectacular, in addition to the singer's beautiful, haunting voice.

The whole set will look like a big harem tent, according to the production manager. The imported main stage is in the shape of a crescent moon and will serve as the backdrop of the live basketball court.

Instead of having Brightman just standing on stage and singing her songs, "Harem" will put her in the middle of a theatrical spectacle. Vaughn explained.

Brightman's repertoire will include tracks from "Harem" as well as her hit singles such as "Eve," "Little Lotte," "Scarbrella," "What a Wonderful World" and Puccini's "O, Bel Ch." In the latter number, she will be backed up by the Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra and theatrical effects.

She is also expected to sing "Dust in the Wind," "The Wind is Love," "A Whiter Shade of Pale," cuts from her "Time to Say Goodbye" album and some tunes from "Phantom of the Opera."

Brightman played Christine in "Phantom of the Opera," one of the stage hits written in her honor by her ex-husband, Andrew Lloyd Webber. She is also the soulful voice blending with the voice of Jose Carreras in "Passion Has Its Glory" and with that of Andrea Bocelli in "Time to Say Goodbye."

Her albums, including "Time to Say Goodbye," "Eden," "Harmony" and "Classic Brightman Classics," have sold more than 11 million copies worldwide.

Tickets to "Harem World Tour 2004" are available at Ticketworld (8705060) and Audiovisual Archives (at www.ticketworld.com.ph) and at the CCP Box Office or Marketing department (8321705, 8321123 local 7408).

The concert is presented by Globe Platinum Privilege Club, Metro's watch shop and Bank member of Switzerland, in cooperation with Patron Blanc, Mega Premium, various Appliances and Goldstar, Gorman Kitchen, MPC Philippines, Cyberzone Network, Metro Magazine and ABS-CBN, together with The British Council, McDonald's, Manila Bulletin, The Foreign Post, What's On Digest, Mega, Montreal and Lifestyle Asia Magazines, Monster Radio FM 93.1, Jam 92.3, Crossover 105.1, Magic 89.9, Jam 88.3 and Wave 89.1.

CROSSOVER LIVE GOES ACOUSTIC AT EL PONTICELLO

"Crossover Live Acoustic" presents an evening of acoustic music in performance Pido and Chedi on Thursday, June 24, starting at 8 p.m. at El Ponticello, on the second floor of Ascot 2000 Bldg. on Valero Street in Salcedo Village in Makati City. You can join the party by calling 7112111 for free invitations or by texting (GZVR (space) (invitation number) (space) (your name, to 2366 for Globe and 2366 for Smart. Text invitations are provided by Globe Wireless Connections.

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Editor Raul G. Marcelo
Assistant Editor Corrie S. Nakpil

91-day T-bill rate rises to 7.634%

By Michelle V. Reina

THE GOVERNMENT sold more retail treasury bonds (RTBs) next month as cautious banks showed a weak appetite for regular government securities, citing the possible impact on the local market of an impending increase in US interest rates.

According to National Treasurer Milan Pigtainen, the Bureau of the Treasury was looking at raising P5 billion worth of 5-year RTBs.

"We decided to issue RTBs next month following earlier proposals that if this thinks' low appetite for regular treasury bills and bonds] continues, then we have to come up with alternatives," Pigtainen told reporters after yesterday's regular T-bill auction.

In yesterday's auction, the Treasury's said its committee to payout all bids for 182- and 365-day treasury bills due to "unreasonably high" returns banks were asking coupled with the low demand.

The rate for the 91-day bills meanwhile, increased by 31.7 basis points to 7.634 percent. This forced the Treasury to accept only P1.41 billion worth of tenders compared with its original offering of P4.5 billion.

Had the Treasury accepted the bids for the 182- and 365-day bills, their rates could have risen to 8.013 percent and 9.900 percent, respectively (barring its previous auction) two weeks ago. their rates stood at only 8.031 percent and 9.44 percent.

All T-bill issues were undersubscribed. Tenders for the 182-day bills amounted to P2.22 billion compared with the government's P4.5 billion offering. Demand for 182-day bills was also weak, with only P1.24 billion in tenders compared with the P3.5 billion borrowing schedule for yesterday. For the 365-day bill, tenders were also low at P1.24 billion compared with the P3 billion offering.

Pigtainen said the auction committee was forced to reject bids for the 182- and 365-day bills mainly because of the low volume of bids. She said the committee would have allowed an increase in interest rates if only banks placed a substantial amount of bids.

Pigtainen added that the banks' behavior to offer only a small amount of bids was unreasonable considering that the market was "very liquid" this time. "They could

BSP seen keeping policy rates steady

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas yesterday said it could still afford to keep its key policy rates steady despite pressure from the expected tightening by the US Federal Reserve.

Emerging from a luncheon meeting with the Monetary Board, BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura said the central monetary institution could still hold off interest rate increases for now.

"For the time being, there's still spare capacity [in the manufacturing sector]. The inflation numbers are still within target range and there doesn't seem to be an

easy liquidity" from investors said.

The BSP said local authorities would not necessarily follow the US Federal Reserve's cue.

Global analysts expect the US Fed to raise interest rates in late by signs capital could switch trying to flatten.

The BSP has kept its key policy interest rates unchanged at 6.75 percent for overnight borrowing and 9 percent for overnight lending. The rates were last reduced by 25 basis points in July last year.

As a preemptive response to threats arising from the peso-dollar

US Embassy Chargé d'Affaires Joseph Mussomeli says in his remarks before the Rotary Club of Makati West, Rotary and Pulso Ng Pari (Voice of Priests) that corruption and unemployment are two problems that are crucial for the next administration to resolve. Mussomeli suggests that threats of loyalty, tolerance and patience might be contributing to the pervasiveness of corruption in the country. On unemployment, he notes that surveys have shown that most Filipinos want fewer children.

Gov't urged to scrap taxes on oil products

By Abigail L. Ho

SCRAPPING specific taxes on petroleum products can alleviate the rising prices of local oil products and prompt oil firms to sell back their costs, according to consumer group Bantay Kuryente.

Danilo Arao, the group's spokesperson, said in a statement yesterday that the government was not exactly helping in arresting the effects of rising oil prices on consumers.

"While it is true that crude oil prices have increased since the start of the year, we in Bantay Kuryente argue that the government can still ensure stable prices if it has political will to do so," he said.

He said imposing RA 8184, or the Oil Tax Restructuring Law, could help reduce the costs of imported petroleum products, giving local oil firms the room necessary to raise their prices.

Under this law, oil firms have to remit to the government taxes worth P5.35 a liter on premium gasoline, P4.35 for unleaded gasoline, P4.80 for regular gasoline, P1.63 for diesel, 68 centavos for kerosene and 10 centavos for bunker oil.

With the country's consumption of about 224,000 barrels, or about 34 million liters, of oil a day in 2003, Arao said the government must have earned P80.4 million daily in specific taxes for petroleum products alone.

Using the 2002 consumption data, he said these specific taxes could generate at least P71.2 billion in revenue for the government, with the weighted average of the taxes pegged at P1.58 a liter.

"At present, the farmers administration projects to maximize such high income at the expense of the people's suffering," he said.

But the government is even planning to raise the current taxes slapped on petroleum products, according to officials, three sources already mentioned.

In an April meeting of the donor agency Development Budget Coordination Committee, the senators of the last taken as a result of inflation exercised as one of the reasons for the plan to increase the taxes on petroleum product.

Other revenue-boosting measures that the government is looking at include slapping a tax on text messaging, increasing taxes on the manufacturers sector, the indexation of sin taxes, and the shift in income taxation beyond regular amount.

But Nicasia Bartel said one way of giving local oil firms an impact led to reduce the prices of their products was the scrapping of the exact same taxes that the government wanted to raise.

CAB renews airline's license

By C. Reina

ADI Philippines Corp., another airline controlled by tycoon Lucio Tan, has received the go-ahead of the Civil Aeronautics Board to continue operating its scheduled flights after its five-year authority expired last June 2.

The CAB renewed for another five years the airline's certificate of authority to operate scheduled air transport services, according to a ranking official of the regulatory agency.

Air Philippines, the country's third-largest airline, has a pending petition to renew its authority to operate scheduled chartered flights that will expire on July 17, 2004.

In its petition with the CAB, the Lucio Tan company said that it took losings or a huge dollar and would need the government approval to a could continue servicing its routes.

Store firm Philippines Airlines also posted P661 million in losses in its pre-refined year ending

Coal cold heart

THE sure admission rates of Harvard will have to fall to settle other new rates. This much is now clear, as it just has knocked out the multi-billion pay-out on "renting."

The Department of Finance had to drop the "renting" tax issuance, as a policy, this rare administration always listens to the voice of reason.

The loudest voice of reason against the "renting" tax, of course, came from cellular telephone companies such as Globe Telecom, which are making a killing.

And so, this rare administration had no choice but to drop the tax. It is now looking for other new taxes, such as the one on fixed income. Yes and I spoke!

* * *

BUT you and I really have to make the sacrifice, if only to help this rare administration reduce its budget deficit. It is seen to hit close to P200 billion this year.

That's not, mind you, the bad-get deficit. The nincom does not even include the P146-billion loan of Napocor this year, thanks to the Gloriastra power subsidy.

This rare administration does not have to worry about the red ink of Napocor anymore, because it has already come up with a brilliant solution.

And that is, to save Napocor from bankruptcy, some P600 billion of its debts must now be shouldered by no other than . . . and, the taxpayers. Still you nod?

* * *

I'll also clear now that this rare administration cannot continue with the power subsidy. Anyway, the elections are over and done with.

Remember that, two years ago, Gloriastra's supposed ruling somewhere down to purgatory, she forced a big cut in electricity rates through the subsidy.

The subsidy cannot go on. For one, as I said, Napocor is facing losses of P146 billion this year alone. For another, we are already facing another power crisis.

It just became obvious this summer. It did not escape the attention of business. Companies are now rushing to buy their own power generation sets.

* * *

RECENTLY, the static estimates of the long-delayed San Roque dam in Pangasinan, cautioned off its electricity generation set. The project was finally finished.

And so big companies killed such sales in the building, which only showed that business was already preparing for the inclement ing power crisis.

If such a crisis indeed comes about, as we saw in the early 1990s, thanks to the administration of Tita Cory, it will only mean additional killer rates to business.

As it is, even without a power crisis, a lot of our installed ing businesses can hardly compete with those in China, for sure, most local businesses will close down.

* * *

THEY are already closing down now, more so when the power crisis. A good indicator is the number of industrial customers of the multi-villified Meralco.

My info is, in only the past few months, the industrial customers of Meralco were down by an amazing 3 percent.

There could be several reasons, but not the least of them, I am sure, is closure of the factories. They probably transferred to China.

The point is, maybe we have to hurry the rate in industrial power rates, which are much higher than residential rates, because of this thing called . . . well, "subsidy."

* * *

HOOK in Luzon this summer, probably as an indication of things to come, the reserve power went down to a disturbing 300 megawatts at one point.

That was bad. No matter how hard this rare administration tried to hide, the info were around the business community. It scared the living daylights out of business.

At such a source, we were actually having a possible disaster. If the world standard reserve is 25 percent. We have a problem!

* * *

OF COURSE the biggest problem was the sudden jump in the prices of fuel. And it was not just oil. Even our favorite pollutants, more often than coal, was also a problem.

In the spot market, coal used to go for $25 per ton. It went up to $60 recently, and they are now saying that it can still go up some more.

It seems that China used to export 16 million tons of coal. Today, that country is buying 24 million tons in the open market.

Thanks to our brilliant planners, while we rely heavily on coal for power generation, we hardly have coal supply contracts. For whatever added reason, we love to buy only in the spot market. Hardhead, you know?

* * *

NOW what moves can we expect from this rare administration to avoid another power crisis? Not much, I suppose.

The Department of Energy will name that new power plants are already going up. We just do not see any of them.

Moreover, Gloriastra herself has other priorities, such as her campaign promise to shift our form of government to parliamentary.

For that's what she promised the Iglesia ni Kristo, the El Shaddai, Bro. Eddie and Speaker Jo de Venecia, to get their support in the recent elections.

* * *

OUR good friend, Jose Fernando Sequia, a surgeon at St. Luke's Medical Center, QUEZON hospital and Cardinal Santos Medical Center, is back in town after a year of clinical training in joint replacement and arthritis surgery at the Stanford University Medical Center in California. He actually trained in the latest techniques in hip, knee, shoulder and elbow replacement surgery under Dr. Stephen Mont and Stuart Goodman.

So now you can perhaps dismiss speculations that all our doctors are going to the US to become nurses. Look, Sequia is back.

Aboitiz power waiting for right time to go public

By Abigail L. Mo

POWER generation firm Aboitiz Power Corp. (APC) will go public once it hits "critical mass," clearing P1.5 billion in profit, and only when the timing is right, according to a ranking official of the company.

Erramon Aboitiz, chief operating officer of holding firm Aboitiz Equity Ventures Inc. (AEV), said that the power firm has euro-reach that critical profit generation stage.

"We'll [at APC encourage] shoot total reserves. "[But] we

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from need to build ourselves on a critical size, when we're generating P1.5 billion in profit. The timing is very important."

Right now, he said, APC has contributed roughly P800 million to AEV's overall income—a little more than half of the "critical" profit range for the power generator from to go public.

APC, for edit, accounted for 36 percent of AEV's total income, while the Aboitizes' power distribution business, which AEV fully absorbed, contributed another 38 percent.

Republic Act 9136, or the Electric Power Industry Reform Act of 2001, required power generation firms to list some of their shares in the Philippine Stock Exchange.

Aboitiz said the listing of APC shares should be timed in such a way that the market would have an appetite for such shares.

Right now, he said the Aboitiz group did not see the timing as right for an initial public offering.

In a move to boost the company's income and eventually allow it to continue an IPO, the Aboitiz group is looking at investing more into existing projects. It also has its sights set on some of the state-run National Power Corp.'s generation assets.

Luzon Hydro Corp., a partnership between AEV and Australia's Pacific Hydro Ltd., will be investing $18 million to $20 million in the 70-megawatt (MW) Bakun-C Hydroelectric Power Project in Benguet.

He said that the group is also eyeing more of Napocor's hydroelectric power assets, after winning the auction for the 1.5-MW Magat project in Ilocos.

CAB renews

Pinoy page B3

March 2004, five to first two months of operations in the current fiscal year were promising, according to officials, as net profits reached almost a billion pesos in April and May.

A year ago, the Philippines was able to convince foreigners to invest in 25 year franchise as it could enjoy the same tax privileges being enjoyed by Bid, and Global Air Pacific.

Air Philippines is 70-percent owned by the while On the remaining 30 percent belongs to Philippine Foundation and the Soliven Industries. The infusion proceeds acquired a majority stake in the airline in 1999.

For airline seven 38 domestic routes through more than 60 flights daily. It flies to Manila, Cebu, Iloilo, Cagayan de Oro, Tacloban, General Santos, Dumaguete, Zamboanga, Bacolod, Catarman and Baguio while nine of its big chartered are used to lease and nearby foreign destinations.

It operates a fleet of 10 Boeing 737s, it has a permit in Hong Kong, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan and the United States. It briefly flew to Indonesia and Brunei but eventual, it stopped because of losses. Its remaining routes are to Singapore to Hong Kong.

BSP seen keeping . . .

Pinoy page B3

volatility the BSP already increased last February the liquidity reserve requirement on peso deposits and deposit substitutes of banks and non-banks with quasi-banking functions by 2 percentage points.

The BSP uses an inflation rate-targeting model in setting its overnight policy rates, which in turn are used by banks as the benchmark in pricing their own

91-day T-bill . . .

Pinoy page B3

say there is not enough liquidity because there is about P75 billion in the interbank call market," she said.

The US Federal Reserve Board earlier announced that it would increase its interest rates by 25 basis points, the increase in US interest rate normally forces the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas to increase its own overnight rates to prevent financial investors from taking their investments to the United States and away from the economy.

"The BSP has already said it would not consider the US decision with an increase in its own overnight rates, so I do not know what the central bank governor hands are still looking for," Figueroa said.

DISCLOSURES

ATLAS Consolidated Mining and Development Corp. said that the 50-percent increase in its share price that rose from P5.20 to P7.80 each on the close to the reported $295-million investment to be made by a foreign company to develop the Tubay Mine within $5 million will be infused by another foreign company for its Palawan nickel project.

* * *

FLUVEL directors of Antillean Foods Corp. were Tony Tan Caktiong, Lucio Tan Group, William Tan Untong, Ang Cho Sit, Antonio Chua Poe Eng, Felipe Alfonso and Robert.

* * *

ELECTED directors of SEE Corp. were Victor Cleo Pacheco de Guzman Jr., Eustaquio Lopez, Oscarito Manzanares Jr., Rosalino Manzano, Jose Blas Castillo, Ma. Teodora Pinlac, Susanne Santos and P.N. Ty.

* * *

ARONCO Jacob replaced Raffels Tagud Jr. as rehabilitation receiver of Regina Navigation Company Inc.

* * *

ELECTED directors of Metro Pacific Corp. were Manuel Pangilinan, Jose Ma. Lim, Edward Tortorici, Alfred Ocampo Burgos Jr., Edward Go, Medina Salazar, Enrique Encinas, Augusto Palisoc Jr., Daniel Lacson, F. Gamma Santos and Roberto Picazo.

* * *

ELECTED directors of Real Philippine Properties Inc. were Edward Kuok Khoon Loong, Tomas Ho Jr., Glenn Ramos, Johnny Colombini, Cynthia Del Castillo, Chua Yeok Kun, Wilfred Ayengco Sr., George Go and Antonio Lorenzo.

* * *

ELECTED directors of Cebu Properties Holdings Inc. were Edward Kuok Khoon Loong, Alfredo Ramos, Tomas Ho Jr., Cynthia Del Castillo, Cirilo Pagtalunan, Manuel Lanuza III, Augusto Palisoc, Pe Shu Chan, Chua Yeok Kun, Florido Fernandez and Federico Real Jr. Compiled by Marka J. Sabina /PDI Research

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DTI: Local Pajeros not part of recall

By Rainier M. Domingo

PAJERO sports utility vehicles sold locally are not included in the recall being implemented by Mitsubishi Motors Corp. in Japan, according to the Department of Trade and Industry.

Adrian Cristobal Jr., trade undersecretary in charge of consumer welfare and trade regulations, said the decision from officials of Mitsubishi's local unit that only diesel models of Japan's 1997 and 1998 models that run on gasoline were being sold in the country.

However, Tokyo's recall of at least 520,000 vehicles over her this month covered Pajero models with diesel engines.

While Mitsubishi Motors Philippines Corp. has not issued any official statement, the DTI has asked to meet with MMPC officials to clarify the coverage of the recall and safety fears of Pajero owners, Cristobal said.

"Mitsubishi is still in the process of conducting a thorough review on the implications of the recall, and we trust here to unveil that [the MMPC] would keep us abreast of any developments," he said.

Early this month MMC in Japan acknowledged it failed to report defects of certain vehicles from government regulators for years.

The company said it had hidden tales and clutch defects, and its executives and managers have been charged by Japanese prosecutors. MMC announced a recall that includes 11,000 units exported from Japan, aside from 160,000 vehicles manufactured in the 1990s, spanning nearly all models.

The latest recall is due to defective axle and front arm significantly, an axle shaft and other defective parts for 10 models made from 1996 through 2000.

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BUSINESS

Book publishers urged to tap BOI perks

By Roxanne N. Damalerio

LOCALLY published books contain expansive relative to imported ones as printers are not taking full advantage of government incentives, according to the National Book Development Board.

In a press briefing after the NBDB's monthly meeting yesterday, Trade Undersecretary Ernesto C. Fernandez said most of the local book publishers had capped the incentives allowed by the Board of Investments since the industry was listed in the Investment Priorities Plan in 1997.

"These companies could enjoy lower duties for imported machines at 1 percent (compared with the prevailing rate of up to 10 percent)," Fernandez said. "They could also qualify for tax holidays and other fiscal and non-fiscal incentives if they are export-oriented."

The official, who represents the Department of Trade and Industry to the NBDB, added that some locally produced books were more expensive than imported because publishers were not availing themselves of incentives.

According to NBDB officials, book prices were being pushed up by the deterioration of the peso as well as the high prices of labor, machinery, paper and other raw materials.

The board listed the following incentives for book publishers:

- tax and duty-free importation of books under the Book Publishing Industry Development Act of 1995 or RA 8047;
- tax and duty-free importation of raw materials for book publishing under the RA 8047;
- possible contracts with the Department of Education under its public school textbook program;
- exemption from value added tax for the sale, importation, printing, publication or distribution of books;
- income tax holidays;
- for BOI-listed firms, additional deductions for labor expenses if they operate in less developed areas;
- tax and duty-free importation of spare parts and supplies for those with a bonded manufacturing warehouse;
- employment of foreign nationals; and
- free participation in seminar-workshops and book fairs, and access to market data.

Ms. Magtis S. Linares, an NBDB governor representing the private sector, said industry players were not aware of these incentives available to them.

Linares, a member of Phoenix Publishing House's management team, said the industry must be informed more about factors that could make business better.

According to the NBDB, the local book publishing industry earns an average of P2 billion yearly.

To perk up activities in the sector, the NBDB launched the "A million books for a million readers by 2005" program, which aims to boost readership among Filipinos.

Globe's Innove intends to expand nationwide

By Carlos S. Bolivo

GLOBE Telecom Inc. is seeking the approval of the National Telecommunications Commission for the expansion of its fixed-line businesses nationwide.

But the application, filed by wholly-owned subsidiary Innove Communications, is being opposed by major carriers including Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co.

Innove wants to become a nationwide local exchange carrier like PLDT, according to a source MTC official.

The competitors believed that Innove's plan, if approved, would only make it harder for fixed-line operators to make money from the landline business.

Innove is the wireless voice and data services unit of Globe. The company absorbed Globelines, Globespeed and wireless broadband Touch Mobile after Globe purchased Isla Communications Inc. from a group led by the Delgado family of the Visayas.

The newest arm scheme of the early 1990s allowed new telecom players to engage in mobile phone business provided they would also roll out landlines in designated areas in the country. Globe was tabbed to operate a fixed-line business in regions 6, 7 and 8. Despite the service area scheme, PLDT remained the only local exchange carrier allowed to operate nationwide.

"Innove has applied for nationwide coverage. It wants to be a nationwide player," according to MTC director Edgardo Cabarles, head of the telecom carrier modernization division.

Till will recall, how a few weeks ago, Hilda of Tiwi left her lover Boy, jumped off the Eiffel Tower and was found in Recto. Well, now Tiwi herself is guilty of Egyptian history CLEOPATRA, having her touch with reality, climbed the Pyramids, jumped off, and was in denial. Talking about rivers, Sonia Gandhi, who turned down the premiership of India, is now a tigress. When I went sailing in Germany, I saw my mother a postcard. "I'm singing in the Rhine," so for the Philippines, it is in the Ilog.

I wish they had not made that film about TROY. Now my anti-virus software, AV rollie, has been detecting Trojan everywhere. Some slipped out the harness. Talking about computer matters my mother hated. Computers can sense disgrace what is wrong with you. I keep sending e-mail to the wrong people, hitting the SEND button before the message is completed, and pressing DELETE instead of SEND. The computer says I have the COOL virus.

Here are some thoughts for today:

It is better to lose a shoe girl than lose a tail.

Writing with a broken pencil is pointless.

Abortion is a non-prophet making organization.

When the big fills in Los Angeles, LCLA.

It was an emotional wedding. Even the cake was in tiers.

I go to funerals in the evening. I am one a consuming person.

A criminal's best asset is his lie ability.

Acupuncture is a pil-well done.

My wife doesn't like food going to waist.

Here are a couple of clean limericks:

There was a young lady named Starr
Who had a large scare on her nose;
When she had it removed,
Her appearance improved
But her glasses slipped down to her toes.

There was an old man called Keith
Who smoked his pair of false teeth.
Until these down on a chair
Forgot they were there
Sat down and got bit underneath.

I have written better poetry, but I have also written worse.

* * *

I have a list of Chinese readers. Do any of you know where I can buy Hong Qu (red yeast rice)? It is made in China so it must be available in Dagupe. It used to be called CHOLESTIN.

I decided not to write about the stock market during the election but as things turned out, there was nothing to write about anyway. Turnover, net of cross sales, fell to P200 million, which is $3 million. Wall Street averages P60 billion a day so they do as much in 1 day as we do in 120 years. I have allowed for Saturdays and Sundays but ignored holidays.

It is time the opposition stopped running around wailing over our financial ills. President Macapagal-Arroyo and her have taken a Cabinet who can address the serious problems that face the nation. This includes a 3% trillion in deficit, which eats up 25 percent of our national income just paying the annual interest. This will increase because the government has taken over the P600 billion losses of Napocor. Fortunately, the Treasury recently swapped dollar-denominated bonds expiring in 2007 and 2008 for bonds due 2034. This saves buys us sometime to balance our budget.

Then there are 13.7 percent unemployed, the highest figure for two years, while the US has created 1.3 billion new jobs in five months, we have moved in the opposite direction. In addition, there are 18.3 percent under-employed, making a total of one-third of the working force. Needless to say, this is the highest figure in the Asian region.

Inflation has been creeping up and has now reached 4.4 percent. This may not sound too bad but in the US, UK and Europe, inflation is below 2 percent and that is the maximum that governments will allow. The Bank of England has raised the bank rate four times since last November even though inflation is only 1.5 percent, rising to 1.7 percent by the end of the year. And it is threatening to raise it again soon to head off a housing bubble.

In the Philippines, workers have not had an increase in their minimum wage for over two years. During this period, inflation has risen about 7 percent and this does not reflect recent increases in bus and jeepney fares. They are asking for P60 P120 a day but the minimum wage of $1 a day is already uncompetitive when measured against China, Vietnam and South Korea, so any increase will result in higher unemployment. Still, they need some protection against inflation so the government will have to pressure the banks to give them P20. The workers will not like it but with all this unemployment, they are in no real position to strike.

This inflation figure bears little resemblance to reality as everything in the Supermarkets go up daily. My daughter's usual bottles of mineral water called Hildy Park, has jumped from P38 to P46, which is 22%. Children's mineral water, manufactured locally, is fatally a luxury item and the increase is scandalous.

Lastly, we have a weak peso due to the political uncertainty caused by the inconclusive debate in the country. India counted 500 million votes in 5 days; we have been counting 30 million votes for 41 days and it still has to be debated on Wednesday and voted upon on Friday. If the Olympics included a medal for inefficiency, we would win the gold.

On June 20, the IMF is expecting to Manila to carry out a thorough examination of our economic status. After 2 weeks of detailed study, they will be in an excellent position to give GMA a list of measures to be implemented. Furthermore, she should be in a position to carry them out. She has been duly elected and has control of both the Senate and the Congress, unlike before when she could not get anything passed. She must raise revenue from alcohol and cigarettes, but she will need to do other taxes that, too.

I have a suggestion. Instead of giving senators P200 million to push, and congressmen P50 million, why not pay them on the basis of the number of acts passed. Say P30 million per senator for every major act, and 05-25 million for less important ones. Congressmen would be paid pro rata. That way, they might get down to the business of getting the country back on its feet.

mrbearbull@hotmail.com

After long time in canvas, Senate and House are 2 tents

MR. BEARBULL

Rose Nakhoul

DID you know...? /C4

LIFESTYLE

Steppers and stationary bikes

WELL AND GOOD

Tina Jhoon

Beginners may find steppers not easy to use because the workout may prove too intense. But many people love the machine because of the intensity of the workout they get. Steppers are big workout fans because it tones the thighs and buttocks.

The most common mistake people make with steppers or stairclimbers is to lean forward and rest their body weight on the handlebars. This results in three things: lower calorie burn, potential injury to the lower back and a decidedly silly-looking appearance because your rear end sticks out and waggles for the whole gym to see.

In an Ohio State University study, women who held the handrails burned fewer calories than those who swung their arms as if they were walking. According to researchers, even the lightest touch on the rails made a difference. Leaning forward and resting one's weight on the handrails was worse—it was the calorie-burned by-half.

Depth, not speed

Another factor that can affect the number of calories you burn is the depth of the steps you take. The machine assumes you are taking a step depth of eight inches, more or less the height of most stair steps. If you are taking fast and quick "baby" steps, you are finding yourself like following that you are burning the steps calories you are on the machine's console.

The correct posture when using a stepper is to stand upright and swing your arms. If you need to hold the handrails for balance, use only your fingertips instead of gripping them tightly.

Avoid leaning on the railing with your shoulders hunched, arms rounded, fingers facing the floor and elbows facing the railing. Over time, this awkward position can lead to injury to shoulders, elbows or wrists.

Keep the whole foot on a pedal and avoid having your heels hanging off the edge. You can end up with Achilles tendonitis, an inflammation of the big tendon at the back of your heel. Stepping with your toes also forces your calves to work too hard and, if you have the genetic potential, makes them look bigger. Lean slightly (only slightly) forward to avoid locking your knees when you straighten your legs.

Rude surprise

Don't just push down on the pedals. Know your knees the way you would when climbing real stairs. But if you think that because you can spend an hour on a stairclimber it will be the same with real stairs, you are in for a rude surprise. Real-stair climbing is much harder because you have to carry your entire body weight. However, since there is less weight bearing on a stepper, the workout is easier on the joints compared to climbing stairs.

If you experience "stairclimber's hurt," an uncomfortable sensation of numbness and tingling in the forefoot, try wiggling your toes occasionally and then taking the workout. Also, try taking your feet off the pedals occasionally. Make sure your shoes are not too tightly laced. Avoid leaning forward too much, since this increases the pressure on the forefoot area.

Stationary bikes

Although elements of using a stationary bike

Correct posture is important when on an exercise machine to avoid injury

the moving map are less compared to treadmills and steppers, you shouldn't just hop on and pedal away. You need to adjust a few things.

Stationary bikes are either upright or recumbent. In the recumbent type, you sit on a backrest seat and your legs pedal in front of you. The recumbent bikes are kinder to the lower back because your knees form a back rest, eliminating the necessity to pedal with a rounded back.

Some people also find the recumbent type more comfortable because the weight of the body is fully supported by the backrest unlike in an upright bike where there is more pressure in

EYE-CATCHING gals, Alex Sison, Angela Silverio and Denise Manahan

FUN persons who love Y Bar, Linda Lolongapo and Lol Villuma

SOON-TO-WED lovebirds, Beautiful tenorama Anna Garcia and Rector's Elvin Bilbao

TEARFY host Anna Liwag, Michael Salonoy and Ramona Urra-Gonzales

'James Dean' is crowned prom king

THE GANG of three. Party people Chito Melo, Jaman Manaois and Rep. Teopisto Plaicencia

STUNNING beauty Maricel Soriano

HOSTESS and diabetic, fundraiser brother Jun and Miguel Bulaon, with gorgeous Carmen Delgado and tough restaurateur DJ Montano

PARTYING BABES, Sheila Katherine and Christina Dandoro

VIBES and Nuno's Bea couple, Louie and Cecille Yonad

CHING Hocson and Jun Rosal

BUSINESS magnate PL. Lim

ALL in the family. Joe Reyes with Tony Boy Meer, his wife Tet's and daughter Kari

PANCHO Villaraza with Pina and Jun Rosal

TDP lawyer Victor Lazatin and Senate President Frank Drilon

MIKEE Cojuangco and Johnna Velasquez

THE MEER GALS. Marites Meer-Alcantara with her sister Marlou Meer-Forbes

BEAUTIQUE Lisa Tiamzon her husband, super schterer Jun Reyes

CEBU Governor Mayor Tommy Osmeña with most of the boys Antonio Meer and former President Fidel V. Ramos

ABAHETO, pals Judy A. Roxas and Dida A. Fores

MARVIC Borromeo and Sonia Dreiga

WOMEN of substance. Mary Ann Perez, renowned artist Annabel Melgarejo and fashionista Lin

CHARLIE, Vince Jr. and Nancy Reyes

HOTSHOTS Rodney Virata and Ed Reyes

RELLI without a cause parried with out pause as the second of three host championships at the swinging V Bar, palanguin.

That hot bar evening, I witnessed the crowning of prom King James (a mysterious character who came and went, a la James Dean) and prom queen, tall, supermodel-turned-model, Alex Swan.

Seconded Hannah Sobel and her younger sister, exotic beauty Natasha, lent a hand in the coronation, while Team V host Ramona Urra-Gonzales and the other James Dean (last evening, David Nipost...Swinfield not Nicky Hopkins shades on the insides but happens in the crowd).

Lucky party animals also got some goodies from Lush and Beauty Bar.

Cool mom of all sorts (although about...from the world of fashion, also socialite, and legendary for some personalities), Vicki and Apples Llorens and Bobi Manufacturas.

Aiming near the booth of Smart Gold supplying deviled punch were Bud Camacho, Nina Ventura, young movie business entrepreneur Paolo Martel and fortunate Compañon of Smart Communications.

Atom Liu, Rina Bernart, Cristy Fermalan, Senior Members, Angela Silverio, Chris Lopez, Ana Santos, Chris Unterweis, Blogger Blanca, Natasha Griffin and Gina Badiz, (that so-sexy-when, had a ball watching cool models from VMAN modeling shoes) in fantastic hip clothes, courtesy of the Young Designers' Guild.

But rock stars had the crowd wildly carrying on the makeshift dance floor until way past 2 a.m.

Needless to say Ashlings, all three were well keep shining, thanks to Smart Gold, natch!

Abogado-de-campanilla

The autobiography to grab at the moment is Antonio Meer y Meloar's "A Lawyer's Fate and Faith." Keep with Ramon O. Cabanayan and Teno Rivilla. Shakin Tony handed one of the country's telecommunication giants, the Philippine Long Distance and Telephone Company.

Until his retirement some years ago, Meer was also legal counsel for such household name-dropppables as the Aramburus, Madrigals, Ongpins and Palancas; multinational companies like Del Monte, Gillette and Squibb-wer, plus hundred-bee prestigious companies.

A man with bottles of jada, Tony has written a life story full of juicy details about himself and, yes, his friends.

Pity Tony's book ain't for sale. So gave away copies of the book to his close pals and colleagues at a most interesting book launch at the Wack Wack Golf and Country Club hallways with everyone in town super visible. Palanguin, I mean everyone who counts.

Starring with Tony's Democracy of the Philippines Sigma Rho fraternity brods like female Founders Frank Drilon, and lawyers Roy Lazatin, Nilo Divo, Bing Pimentel and Pancho Villaraza. Private, too, were Chino Trinidad and friends like Sris. Jingo Osmeña, Cebu Mayor Tommy Osmeña, members current Manolo Lopez, Ashraf and George Litton, Jorge Ancheta and sister-lady-Susan and stylish Baby Romo, Jr. Ana Baril, popular Dr. Miguel Calderon and Cher De Rivera.

Helping daddy entertain his well-wishers were daughters Marlene Jodhos, Mary Ann Perez, and Marites Meerdeo, sons Tony Jr., Mike, Ricky and Jamy, and their mother, Susan. Most of the children acted in from the US of A and Australia to share the big day of the life of the party, Tony M., natch.

Without batting an eyelash, tertians opened the book and started unraveling for familiar names and faces.

The story I loved, best was about how the late southern tycoon Emmanuel Araneta took so long to pay for the construction of the Araneta Coliseum. Apparently, he suspected the pope would downlaw soon after he constructed the big Dome. He told Tony that if the pope were from mex to one dollar dare to four to one, he would be gaining the ordinary practically by free. A man who definitely had business savvy, palanguin.

Tony Meer is definitely a man for all seasons. As a student at the Ateneo de Manila and UP, this suave gentleman went a-courting somewhere on horseback. He was president of the Philippine Jaycees, president of the Manila Polo Club, and a "lawyer's lawyer" who handled landmark cases, palanguin.

A long queue formed as the mestiza classic'ed for Tony to autograph their copies of his book. Needless to say, this author of the hour was only too happy to oblige, palanguin.

As for us, well, I finally finished my first book, and now you're going to read another one hopefully.

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

Maurice Arvoche

Photos by Alex Von Hagen-o Kodak Wan

Far from the madding canvass

My trip to the United States and Canada to visit my daughter and other relatives has given me a respite from the bad news that bombards us daily and also a chance to read the books I have always wanted to read but could not because in the Philippines due to my hectic schedule.

In the past two weeks I bought five excellent books and finished reading Dan Brown's "The Da Vinci Code," which justly touched on the same topics and even generations in my latest book, "On Christianity: New Age and Reincarnation." I also read "Cracking the Da Vinci Code" that clearly and beautifully explained the major history and facts mentioned in Dorsal's book.

Then I got hold of and devoured the "Limitless Mind" by Lone physician Dr. Ron Jeff Ing who, together with another physician Dr. Harold Potkoff, developed the pioneering scientific studies on remote viewing at the Stanford Research Institute. I personally met Dr. Ing in Menlo Park, California, many years back and had a wonderful discussion with him about remote viewing over dinner.

During several long trips, I finished reading Jon Krel's startling book "Mind Into Prophecies" that was made into a movie starring Richard Gere and was shown in Manila a year or two ago. It's about a month-like humanoid creature with wings that appeared to dozens of people in the New Mexico Mount Point in West Virginia. Most the appearance stranger things happened to the people. They left the people of Mount Point scared and suspicious of strangers.

No such place!

When I went to Virginia two years ago, I tried to find Mount Point but when I asked, nobody knew anything about it.

The last book I read was Lynn Pickett's "Bluey Bingalobster, Cheshmanty's Hidden Goddess," a most fascinating book that explodes the spirit-about belief being a retirement prominent, and reveals her more plausible background as a woman of great wealth, wisdom and courage. The book also presents interesting evidences of the church's deliberate attempt to manipulate lies, together with John the Baptist who studied Jesus as a miracle worker and spiritual leader.

Mary Magdalene comes out clearly in the book as the possible head of the Apostles, beloved by Christ and so adored by him given the secret task of continuing his spiritual work after his death. This is a must read book for all Christians.

Most exciting US city

But I didn't spend all my time abroad reading books. I also had a chance to visit one of the most exciting places in the United States, Las Vegas, the gaming and entertainment capital of the world.

This place is a constant state of flux. The dizzying array of fabulous shows featuring some of the best entertainers in the world is enough to make any visitor spellbound. One does not need to have as much money to appreciate Las Vegas. There are many very good shows anyone can watch for free in several of the big hotels and casinos.

The old casino hotels that made Las Vegas famous, like Stardust, Flamingo and the Riviera are still there, believe it or not. But they are no match to the new fabulous and spectacular entertainment interactions like Bellagio, Paris, Mandalay Bay, New York New York and Venetian.

But the Sigfried and Roy show, which dominated Las Vegas for 14 years and earned billions of dollars, is no longer there after they was mangled and almost killed by his own trained tiger during a horrifying show last year. His body massive bodily savaged by the animal that is so suddenly that he could go back to work. And Sigfried would not work with tigers ever.

Changes

Yes, some things have changed in Las Vegas. Even my own favorite hangout, the pyramid-shaped Luxor hotel, is no longer the same. Gone is the classic Egyptian atmosphere on the ground floor. Some of the life-size and impressive statues of ancient gods and goddesses have been replaced by more distinctive, futuristic looking pieces by homicidal attendants in ancient Egyptian attire. Visitors will see scantily clad cigarette and drinks ladies.

The gift shops that used to sell natural Egyptian artifacts, figurines, amulets, paintings, etc. do not carry as many items as before. I was hardly able to buy anything new. Even the classic and highly authentic Egyptian designs on linen wraps and glasses have been replaced by modernized and stylized versions, thus once-cashier explained to me that management had replaced the supplier of those items. That's why they looked different.

Ah, but on Las Vegas everything went change to get ahead of competition.

> 'For almost four weeks, I hardly had news about the Philippines and no idea who won in the recent elections'

EXERCISE OF THE WEEK

Prone double leg lift

STRENGTHENS the buttocks and hamstrings (back of thighs)

Equipment:
Exercise mat, ankle weights or rubber band (optional)

Exercise technique:

1. Lie face down (prone) with your hands underneath your forehead.
2. Lift both legs by contracting your buttocks muscles. Keep both leg knees on the mat.
3. Slowly lower your legs to the mat.

Performance Spin:
1. Contract the muscles in your buttocks before you lift your legs.
2. Avoid lifting your legs more than a few inches, otherwise you will strain your lower back.
3. Gently pull your bellybutton toward your spine as you lift your legs to stabilize your torso.
4. Lift your legs slowly and with control. Do not jerk.
5. Do this exercise only if you are already used to lifting one leg at a time.
6. If this exercise bothers your lower back, try putting your hands underneath your abdomen. If it still bothers you, avoid this exercise.

Repetitions:
Do 10 repetitions.

New products for trouble-free hair removal

BODY Nature Cold Wax and Body Nature Depilatory Cream Duo from Japan have been introduced for trouble-free hair removal.

All Body Nature products have been approved by the Bureau of Food and Drugs since its various to suit different skin types. The products, designed to be more economical and risk-free, allow three to four weeks in between waxing, instead of the usual three to four days, for plucking or shaving. They work in shorter but warmed sessions and then last up to 4 weeks.

Blooming Pride Phils., exclusive distributor of Body Nature products, has made available the Hot Pro-Set kit that contains complete hair-removing accessories for the wax-method, the ingredients are also applied, easy-to-follow instructions and ready-to-carry tote bag for storage and handling.

THE BODY Nature Creme Depilatory is quick-action with no wax, as it has undergone hypoallergenicity tests.

Choose from the Body Nature hair removal creams such as Body Nature Cera Pro Kids Wax, which comes in compact and body strips ideal for legs, arms and other fine surfaces; and Facial Strips for the face, upper lips and other parts that have small coverages. A box of body strips has 10 single strips and two post-depilation cremes.

For the underarms where hair removers thicker and harder to remove, the Body Nature Depilatory Cera Fingers and Chinwhisk Men Strips may be available.

The Body Nature Creme Depilatory comes in scented and sensitive variants, which can be used on all body parts especially the bikini area.

Body Nature is available at Mercury Drug, Rustan's, Super Sunday, SM, Landmark, Crossings, PCE, 168, Robinsons Department Store and Metro Galleries.

Steppers and stationary bikes

Previous page A3

ties gymnasia. The makes no problem a good choice for the overweight.

Good cross-training

Remember, you must emphasis on the buttocks and hamstrings while upright. Video focus more on the quadriceps as front of the thighs. Using both types is good cross-training routine.

Whatever bike you use, make sure you adjust the seat height correctly in its upright bike, when the pedal is at the lowest position, your knee is slightly but not quite, straight. If you have to stretch or lock your legs to pedal downward, the seat is too high. If your knees feel crowded up toward your chest when you pedal upward, the seat is too low.

The same guidelines apply with a recumbent bike except that you adjust the seat forward or backward.

Don't pedal with your toes or you may get cold or foot cramps. Make sure you press down from the ball of your foot and through your heel and then pull up with the top of your foot. Adjust the pedal straps so your feet are caught snugly in between but not so tightly that you cut off the blood circulation.

Don't hunch over an upright bike. Bending your back can result in low- or back strain. Lean slightly forward from the hips. The load should be light enough for you to ride the bike in good form but heavy enough that the workout challenges you. If you are rocking back and forth or gripping the handle bars tightly, the resistance load may be too high for you.

Next week: Elliptical trainers and rowers.

Visit www.mypaperfitness.ph

National marathon kicks off June 27 in Lipa City

MILO, the Olympic energy drink, launches the 20th editions of the National Mile Marathon on June 27 in Lipa City.

The annual running competition has helped discover and develop the country's best marathoners for international competitions.

A previous winner, 2002 National Mile Marathon champion Edwardo Bautista, will be representing the country at the 2004 Olympics in Athens, according to Milo sports consultant Bo Gonzaga.

Supported by the Departments of Education and Tourism, the 20th National Mile Marathon is expected to draw a huge number of participants. Last year's 27th edition registered a total of 66,140 runners, representing a 59.36 percent increase over the previous year's. Student runners increased by 57.05 percent last year—a total of 66,239—compared to the year before.

National race organizer Rudy Biscocho says this year there might have 100,000 runners.

The 20th National Mile Marathon will run from June until November. After the Lipa kickoff, the schedule is: Iloilo City, July 4; Manila City, July 11; Metro Manila, July 25; Cagayan de Oro, Aug. 1; Olongapo City, Aug. 8; Cebu City, Aug. 15; Baguio City, Aug. 22; Negar City, Aug. 29; Davao City, Sept. 5; Laoag City, Sept. 12; Butuan City, Sept. 19; and Bacolod City, Sept. 26.

The finale will be on Nov. 14 in Manila.

The marathon features 10 Kiddie Run, 5k Fun Run, 5k Media Run (Print Race), 10k Run (Metro Manila Race), 21k (Half Marathon) Regional Elimination Race, 42k Open Metro Manila Elimination Race and a 42.195 k Final Race.

Other fun events include the Biggest School Delegation Contest, Cheerleap Competition and an Inter-School Running Team Competition. Other highlights of the race's marathon are writing and photo contests for members of the media.

REYNALDO Chua, Tourism director PWCR, Pol Dec Ong, Milo sports executive Rudy Biscocho, national race organizer, 20th National Mile Marathon; and Eugene Yap, GM, Baguio Park Hotel

Old mango tree embroils Church in new controversy

By Constantino C. Tejero

A MAJESTIC mango tree stands by a cemetery wall at the back of the Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church, on Victoria Avenue, Barangay Mariana, New Manila, Quezon City, near Broadway Centrum. It has survived countless typhoons and droughts.

The tree seems to have been left pretty much alone for more than half a century, its trunk grown so big it may take three persons hand in hand to encircle it.

A banyan from the Department of Energy and Natural Resources named Ma. Esther (really!) has reportedly said it is good for another 150 years.

But the Carmelite priests who own the property where the tree stands have other ideas. Last year, they divulged a plan to cut down the tree to make way for the construction of a seminary.

After surviving numerous cycles of quarreling dry seasons and disturbed wet seasons, the tree is now caught in a man-made storm.

The priests may not be familiar with Ms. Jenny Ribay's axiom that governments of schoolchildren commit to memory, or they would have realized the link of nature and identity: "Only God can make a tree."

The religious are supposed to be champions of God's creation, canvassing folk of all sort. Now they are being mocked as "killers."

To add to the grand irony of the situation, the controversy erupts a few days before Arbor Day (June 25 is set by Presidential Proclamation 396, issued on June 2 last year).

It can be done

Some 250 parishioners have written a petition asking the Carmelites to reconsider their plan and redo the design.

Dilvin Bautista's of Mother Earth Philippines recently brought together environmentalists and media people in her house in Quezon City for "A Pena Conference to Save a Beautiful Mango Tree." The event was marked a gathering of mourners toiling for a fight.

There was Regina Paterno of Winnie, the group that battled Manila Mayor Lito Atienza last year for preservation of the Arroceros Forest Park and more (he resigned as Mother Earth).

There was Sister Pacheco of the Carmelites' Citizens against Pollution, aka the Kalipunan ng Mga Madreselvas, and Bishop Bernardo de Jesus of the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority last year over the cutting of trees along Edsa (some become all the way to Carmelitan Gardens in Quezon City).

Abutments opened the "meeting" by pointing to a tall, ancient Ingwilan. Her house was built around the tree, and a small courtyard was created on the space where it stood. She wanted to show it could be done, that the architectural design of the seminary could be shaped around the beautiful mango tree as it did not have to be destroyed.

"This tree represents the other trees being killed or will be killed," she said. "From the architectural point of view, I don't know of any architect who would recommend killing a tree."

Award the law!

There were, though, and his name is Yeno Pineda, the Carmelites' project architect. Today Lim Lumanglas of Tanggol Puno, a resident of Bicutan, said Pineda was standing by Carmelite superior Fr. Jesse Rodero, and the two seemed "not amenable to redesign the seminary".

University of Santo Tomas College of Architecture dean Agnes Gonzo reportedly said it could actually be done.

Someone said 10,000 regional directors Gwen Dawes suggested the planting of five saplings to replace the ancient mango tree. That is the law, the affected tree cannot be saving, and they could always go to Congress to have the law amended.

"She wants us to go to Congress where they're still canvassing one vote," exclaimed Montero.

"By the time the law is amended, the mango tree will have been cut," someone added.

Mitzi Bonn of lawyers for the Environment cited Presidential Decree 953, "which mandates tree planting and penalizes the needless cutting of trees."

Barbara said, "Metro Manila is the most polluted metropolis after Mexico City and this is mainly [due to] vehicular traffic. The trees absorb carbon monoxide, they give us beauty, oxygen and cool shade in many seasons. Total prevention. Would the seminarians be able to do that for us? Can they give us oxygen? Can they prevent floods? Can they absorb carbon monoxide for us?"

Citizens' viewpoint

In a statement, the group pointed out: "The killing of this mango tree is senseless, because one can renovate a building without killing it. A number of eco-friendly architects are willing to contribute designs for the seminary without killing the tree."

The campaign has received support from Grace Poore, Manila Seedling Bank, Haribon Foundation, Miriam Defensor, Architects of the Environment.

Asking the media to help as well, Alcantara and the Church-size not afraid of tension except the media, pointing to its reaction when the eco-activists in subway panels became public. "But as artist Abet Cueto said, the killing of this mango tree is worse than the rape of a parishioner."

She added, "We are going to talk to Cardinal Rosales, who's required to be the most environment-friendly in the Church. If we cannot gain access to him, we talk to the Pope. We will write him: Dearest Pope..."

THE MANGO tree at the back of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church in Quezon City has survived typhoons and droughts.

Fun run for people with disabilities

"DAKBO NA... Sana-Sana PWD Inclusive Fun Run" will be held 6 a.m., June 27, at the Adidas Sports Camp, Fort Bonifacio Global City.

This is a first of its kind fun walk/run with both handicapped and able-bodied runners participating in the 3K and 5K distances.

The event was organized by the Spinal Cord Injury Foundation headed by Sheryl Rose M. Siva, a paraplegic. During the event, runners will be paired with persons with disabilities (blind, wheelchair bound, prosthetic limb) and walk or run as a team.

Participants are encouraged to come in colorful and creative costumes. Prizes will be given away to individuals and teams with the best costumes, as well as the organization with the most number of participants.

Registration is ongoing at the Sergio Medical Clinic, Alimpolis, Greenhills. There will also be an on-site registration on the day of the event. Call 9211945 and 0918-9227994 or 6382741 and 8917-8312583.

Retail virgin coconut oil

VIRGIN coconut oil is now available in retail outlets of Mercury Drug (ProSource label) and Health and Beyond stores (San Benito's in Rockwell, Glorietta, Robinsons Galleria and Ermita.

For volume orders of more than one liter pre-contract, call Manila Herbal & Botanical Oils Co. at 8885941 to 45.

A MOTHER consults a nutritionist on proper heart nutrition and balanced diet.

There is a mistaken notion that obese children are cute, but chubby is not necessarily healthy

Heart disease prevention has to start early

Text by Zane A. Jambaro
Photos by Rudy Esperas

Did you know that a simple, persistent sore throat, when not treated properly, could lead to a potentially disabling heart problem?

Heart disease is the No. 1 killer in the country, followed by stroke and cancer. Although some heart conditions are congenital and/or part of the family's medical history, other conditions, such as rheumatic heart disease, can be prevented if the patient were properly initiated.

Streptococcal sore throat, for instance, leads to rheumatic fever that affects many connective tissues, especially the heart, joints, brain or skin. Rheumatic heart disease (RHD), or the leaking of the heart valves, results from this, and in effect can last a lifetime.

Depending on how bad the damage is and which heart valves is affected, the heart will respond accordingly where the heart becomes enlarged and can't pump out all its blood.

A study by the Makati Medical Center's team of cardiologists of 53 patients—mostly high school and college graduates—found that over 82 percent of the subjects did not know the significance of antibiotic treatment for sore throat. But some 50 percent still medicated or took antibiotics without consulting a doctor.

Of the 40 persons who did consult a physician and were prescribed with oral antibiotics, 30 percent did not comply with the doctor's instructions.

The MMC team stressed that the best defense against RHD was to avoid contracting rheumatic fever.

"If you [do not comply with the full treatment regimen], take antibiotics three to five days instead of 10, [the sore throat] will [keep] recurring and that's when rheumatic fever," says Dr. Asuncion Abella-Bolivar, pediatric cardiologist at the MMC and head of its Cardiovascular Rehabilitation and Preventive Cardiology Program.

Although the incidence of RF and RHD has sharply declined in many developed countries, they remain major problems for many Third World countries. While the high cost of medical care is partly to blame, the main reason is really lack of information on prevention.

Abella-Bolivar says there is a "whole spectrum of diseases that are potentially preventable," such as the growing incidence of childhood obesity, high cholesterol level and high blood pressure. The MMC's preventive cardiology program aims to prevent problems that begin early in life from becoming full-fledged diseases in adulthood.

"In obese, hypertensive adolescent is probably going to be an obese, hypertensive adult," she says as she points out that obesity, high blood pressure, heart disease and high cholesterol are interlinks.

Abella-Bolivar says children weighing more than what is ideal for their height and age may not have problems yet. But overweight is likely to continue and starting at 10 years old, improper diet starts depositing lipid plaques that can start clogging arteries or blood vessels.

Children who follow a normal diet may ensure develop hypertension or diabetes.

Another study by MMC in four Makati elementary schools revealed that nearly 1 percent of children aged 6-13 are persistently hypertensive.

Abella-Bolivar notes there is a mistaken notion that obese children are cute. "Chubby is not necessarily healthy," she says.

The physician stresses even children should follow a certain growth pattern to versus of height, age and weight. Any deviation from the pattern should be taken as a warning.

The program follows a multidisciplinary approach to prevention, knowing that children are not the center subjects. It involves a primary attending physician, pediatric rehabilitation cardiologist, physical therapist, nurse-educator pediatric psychologist and nutrition specialist.

"We advise, monitor and help promote programs to [get] children to develop healthy habits. Parents have to see a new pattern for their kids and for themselves. Discipline must be installed from the start, and parents must be willing to go through difficult times because these will always be necessary," Abella-Bolivar says.

"Filipinos overindulge children. We want them to be happy so we give them French fries and burgers every other day [that] they no longer want to eat vegetables and fruits," she adds.

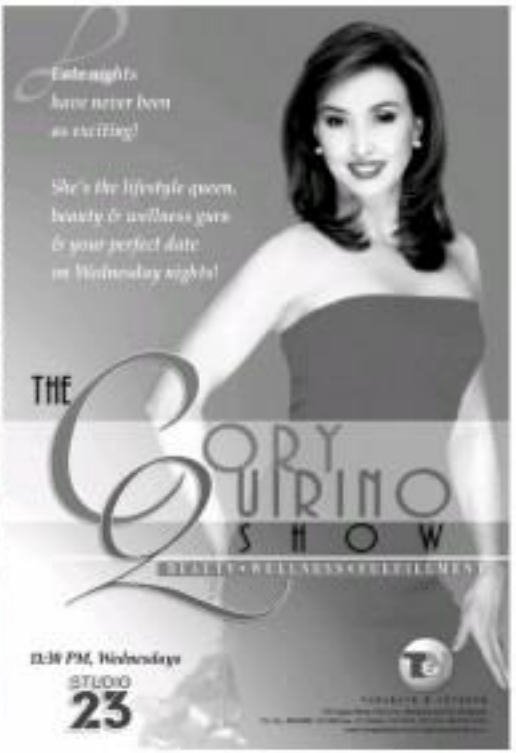
Some parents, in fact, reward their children for say, doing good in school, by taking them to a fast-food joint. So early on kids develop the notion that fast food is good.

Parents who want their kids to join the HRH program must first be evaluated by their pediatrician, who will make the referral. "We don't want every parent walking into the clinic with their children. We don't want to create a panic among parents," she says.

The Cardiovascular Rehabilitation and Preventive Cardiology Program is at the 3/F Makati Medical Center, Makati City, tel. (632) 815-9911 local 33.

E-mail the author at ajambaro@inquirer.com.ph

PATIENTS can choose from various cardiovascular machines, with doctors, nurses, physical therapists and a pediatric psychologist closely monitoring their condition.



Useful health trivia

WELLNESS aficionados will probably appreciate this old-new know-how. It isn't new that a little knowledge is a dangerous thing. In this case, it can help improve your state of well-being.

- One cigarette can destroy 25-100 mg of Vitamin C.
- Most store-bought milk with synthetic Vitamin D added can rob the body of magnesium.
- Elderly people do not get enough Vitamin D due to little exposure to the sun.
- Oral contraceptives interfere with the absorption of Vitamin C, B6, B12, folic acid from most diets.
- Children need more protein than adults (about 1½-2 times more per pound of body weight), and babies require even more.
- Daily "happy hours" can rob the body of Vitamin C and B.
- The immune system will be depressed from constant consumption of foods with monosodium glutamate or nitrite, artificial colors/flavors, preservatives and other additives.
- Raw proteins have enzyme inhibitors that make it difficult for the body to digest all kinds of protein.
- Natural fat (untreated fat) is better for the body than hydrogenated fat (found in low-fat butter substitutes like margarine). Hydrogenated oil is a room-temp asset that has been linked to cancer.
- Vitamin EC can cure sex and sex violence.
- Carpal tunnel syndrome and hammond imbalances could indicate Vitamin B deficiency.
- Magnesium is a muscle relaxant and a considered nature's equivalent of calcium channel blocker drugs.
- The United States Department of Agriculture's Human Nutrition Research Center on aging at Tufts University says daily consumption of Vitamin E supplements have been found to reduce the risk of developing cataracts.
- For more brain power, 100 mg of the phospholipid supplement phosphatidyl serine (PS) daily is suggested. It can help those with normal age-related memory problems regain at least 15 years of youth power.
- Recent studies have shown that the natural selenium may significantly slow the progression of the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), which causes the acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS).
- Flavonoids found in red grapes can be 1,000 times more powerful than Vitamin E.
- People who consume more fish or more lutein-a seeds have a lower rate of developing heart disease compared to those who eat meat here from once a week.
- Drinking soda and eating foods rich in sugar or carbohydrates stimulate the body to consume more fat.
- An onion a day keeps stomach cancer away. Onions allylic sulfides (anti-cancer compounds) activate enzymes that neutralize cancer causing substances.
- Many people lose enzymes necessary to digest milk after the age of 12. This is why adults suffer from lactose intolerance, like having gas, bodyproblems, after drinking milk.
- Taking Vitamin E supplements can lower the risk of heart disease.
- The American Cancer Society says new studies reveal that the life expectancy of women who have can be longer by 10 years compared to smokers.
- Parsley can be a woman's best friend. The juice strained. Found in apples, grapes, raisins) may retard bone loss in women after menopause. It also helps women on HRT (estrogen replacement therapy) by keeping estrogen in the blood longer.
- The swallowing of multivitamin should be avoided as there may be a connection between the social hygiene product (with its additives) and bowel diseases.
- Aspirin may triple the rate of the body's release of Vitamin C.

Practice calmness:

Walk with purpose but with calmness. Speak with passion but with power. Act with energy but with serenity. These are the ways to manage the forces within you, using them not against but together with the flow of life.

Choose an affirmation each morning to start your day with inspiration not aggravation.

Breathe in a relaxed manner. Close your eyes and affirm: "I walk with the Spirit today." Visualize yourself bathed in brilliant white light.

Calming drink:

Take a hot or chilled cup of peppermint tea for extra energy, add a slice of fresh ginger for that zing.

Love and light!

Source: Carl Mindell's "Vitamin Bible for the 21st Century", more beauty and wellness tips in "The Cory Quirino Show," Studio 23, 11:30 p.m., Wednesdays; latest is "Me Beauty & Au mun." AAM 10:00, 6:30/7:30 p.m., Sundays

Take Charge Doc!

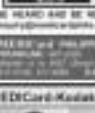
By Dr. Nicky S. Montoya

The Star Tele Group (Star) now features questions and answers about general health issues and illnesses. MEDICard's Medical Director Dr. Nicky Montoya answers questions on health through the maintenance and supervision of the MRO's network of accredited specialists. And in a common thrust with the campaigns of the government, your weekly healthcare guide available in features on the Calendar of Health Events of the Department of Health featuring for this month of June an awareness campaign on cigarette smoking risks and Prostate Cancer.

What are the symptoms of prostate cancer and how it is diagnosed?

Prostate cancer rarely causes symptoms early in the course of the disease because majority of the abnormal tissue is in the periphery of the gland away from the urethra. The presence of symptoms as a result of the prostate cancer suggest a locally advanced or metastatic disease. Examples of which are hesitancy, decrease force of stream and intermittency. This is the result of the growth of prostate cancer into the urethra or bladder neck. Irritative voiding symptoms may also be present such as frequency, nocturia, urination during sleep, dysuria, and rare incontinence. Local progression of the disease and obstruction of the ejaculatory ducts can result in hematospermia (bloody ejaculate or semen) and decrease in ejaculatory volume. Impotence can be a manifestation of prostate cancer that has spread outside the prostatic capsule to involve the nerves.

The combination of digital rectal exam (DRE) and serum Prostate Specific Antigen (PSA) (a blood test) are the most useful first line tools for screening the risk of prostate cancer. Confirmation is by transurethral ultrasound (TRUS) guided prostate biopsy.



Our featured specialist on prostate cancer was answered by MEDICard specialist Dr. **Marcelino L. Morales, Jr.** Dr. Morales, a graduate of Medicine from UST, is in the field of Urology. He received his specialization training for General Surgery at the Metropolitan Hospital and his subspecialization residency for Urology at the National Kidney and Transplant Institute in Quezon City. Dr. Morales is a member of the Philippine Medical Association, Philippine College of Surgeons, Philippine Board of Urology and the Philippine Urological Association. He is a lover of golf, swimming and target shooting. Dr. Morales holds clinic at Room 617, Medical Arts Bldg. of St. Luke's Medical Center every Mondays, Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays from 10 AM to 12 noon.

BE HEARD AND BE READ. Write to DR. NICKY S. MONTOYA care TAKE CHARGE DOC!! or e-mail him at heart@pacific.net.ph for response on health matters.

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MEDICard-Kodak Contract Signing

MICHAEL PHILIPPINES CEO, the country's subsidiary leader in photographic supplies, signed the renewal of its MEDICard Healthcare program last June 10 at Kodak House. Standing (L-R) are MEDICard's Eric A. Reyes, Corp. Accounts Mngr.; and Dr. Nicanor Montoya, Medical Director; Michael Cruz, Dist. Manager; and Jose Bonifacio Jr., Kodak's Operations Mngr.). Standing (L-R) are Kodak's Antonio Pelayo, Sales Mngr.; Ed Mabasa, Collections Mngr.; Bernard Ong, Credit Account Supervisor; Jo Ann Abaya, Mngr.; Marivelle Cardoso, AVP, Marketing & Chairs Morgan (AVP, Sales); Rodolfo Salvacion, MEDICard's contract coordinator. See story **B3**

BEFORE Lourdes takes to aerobics, here's a gym.

Beauty salon opens new branch

LOURDES beauty salon is now in two locations with the opening recently of its branch in the 3M Raymundo Building, 14 Balete Drive, New Manila, QC.

The first Lourdes parlor is at 1 Almeda St., Mercedes Homes, Teachers Sites, QC. Lourdes, owned by Uyen Chau, has hair and makeup expert Rosey Jose as salon manager.

Both Lourdes salons offer haircut with blow dry, hair repair straightening, hair and makeup styling, hair coloring, ironing, perming and highlighting. Special treatments include hair and scalp treatment, waxing and, on appointment, dermatological service from Dr. Elsa Baron.

The Mercedes salon has an adjacent café that has become a venue for meetings and wine parties. The café opens in a garden that can accommodate up to 70 guests.

The salon's second floor has a gym equipped with the latest equipment like stationary bikes, treadmill and rowing machines. Certified physical therapists supervise exercise programs based on the client's needs. The spa offers an assortment of body massages and facial and body treatments.

The Lourdes branch in Balete Drive offers the same services, but without a gym. Like the Teachers Lourdes, the ground floor houses the salon and café, while the spa is on the second floor.

LOURDES in New Manila has a spa on the second level.